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The BOOKMAN

JEFFERY FARNOL
BERTA RUCK
Photos by E. O. Hoppé.

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NOTICES.

All communications intended for the Editor must be addressed to the Editor of The Bookman, St. Paul's House, Warwick Square, London, E.C.4.

A preliminary letter of inquiry should be sent to the Editor before any manuscript is submitted for his consideration.

News Notes.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT.
THE BOOKMAN
250 GUINEAS PRIZE COMPETITION.

The increasing cost of book-production is, in these days, raising very serious difficulties for the author as well as for the publisher—especially for the author who is unknown. Articles and letters have recently appeared in the newspapers reiterating that it is becoming almost impossible for the beginner to get any chance at all, for, until the enterprise is less costly and speculative, most publishers prefer to limit their lists to the works of novelists of established reputation, and are unwilling to take the risk of publishing a first novel.

It has always been part of The Bookman's *programme to look out for new talent and encourage young authors of promise and, in the adverse circumstances that face them at present, we have decided to offer*

A Prize of 250 Guineas for the best First Novel.

For the purposes of this Competition a "first" novel is defined as one by a writer who has never before had a work of fiction (other than a volume of short stories) published in book form.

Full particulars of the Competition will be sent on application, enclosing a stamped addressed envelope, to The Editor,

The Bookman,
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Our First Novel Prize Competition is meeting with an extraordinarily successful reception. Already over two thousand applications have been received for particulars, and they are still coming in, most of the more recent being from Canada, Australasia, South Africa, India, America, and elsewhere overseas.

"The Tragic Bride," a new novel by Francis Brett Young, will be published by Mr. Martin Secker about the end of July. Few of our younger authors have done more distinguished work in fiction or poetry than Mr. Brett Young, who will be the subject of a special article by Mr. Compton Mackenzie in the August Bookman.

Mrs. Zora M. Godden, of Weybridge, writes: "In reference to the review in this month's Bookman of Mr. R. D. Paine's 'Call of the Offshore Wind' (Constable), I should like to point out that my great-grandfather, John Fenwick, shipowner of Tynemouth, was actually the first owner on the Tyne to 'copper' the bottoms of his ships. His

son and successor in the business (Captain John Fenwick, my grandfather) told me that he well remembered the astonishment of the workmen: 'Eh, hinney! why does Muster Fenwick put brass bottoms to his ships? They will all sink.' This must have been quite in the early part of last century. At all events before 1820." The Israel Fenwick, shipbuilder, of Mr. Paine's story, fiercely opposed the use of metal in building his ships and his son and successor let the business dwindle and went to sea sooner than outrage his father's ideals by adopting modern methods. Evidently Mr. Paine's heroes belonged to a different family of the same name.

The year 1840 was a year that brought lustre to the calendar. It saw the birthdays of Thomas Hardy, of Austin Dobson, of Edward Clodd and, to say nothing of others eminent in the same or other walks of life, of Richard Whiteing who passes his eightieth milestone on the 27th of this month, and is still, as he always has been, far more intensely interested in all that the world around him is doing than in himself and his own affairs. Thinking so little of self, he has even forgotten to grow old, except in the mere carnal sense of the word, and it would be true to say of him, as Oliver Wendell Holmes in his old age said of himself, that he is eighty years young. For he is as fine an idealist still and, in his broad democratic sympathies, as modern and abreast of the times as the youngest among us who are apt to imagine that the new spirit of the new day is newer than it really is, till we realise that it was living in him and such as he before most of us were born. It is characteristic of Mr. Whiteing, of his modesty or his freedom from self-consciousness, that though in that delightful book of his personal recollections, "My Harvest," which was published by Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton four years ago, he touches in some admirable, vividly realised pictures of his boyhood, of his early journalistic struggles, of his experiences as a journalist in various parts of the world for the *Manchester Guardian*, the *New York Tribune*, the *New York World*, the *Daily News*, and other papers, he tells you less of himself than of his famous contemporaries and the social, political and literary developments of the days he has known, and he is silent about the distinguished career as a novelist which he entered upon at a time of life when the majority of men are beginning to consider that their work is done. Certainly, he had written books in his younger days. There was that forerunner of Mr. Dooley, "Mr. Sprouts—His Opinions," published in 1866; his first novel, "The Democracy," ten years later, and in 1888 that masterly satirical story, "The Island"; but these were done as the by-the-way recreations of a busy journalist. It was not till after he had retired from the *Daily News*, where for many years he had been one of the three leader writers, Herbert Paul and Andrew Lang being the other two, that in 1899 Mr. Whiteing settled down in earnest to realise himself as a novelist and that same year with "No. 5, John Street" stepped straightway into popularity. Novels dealing with the underworld of London were plentiful at that period, but none enjoyed a wider vogue and no other has so triumphantly held its ground. "John Street" has passed through many editions since then, and remains as vigorously alive as ever in the cheap reprints. It was followed by "The Yellow Van," "Ring in the New," "All Moonshine" and by a charming, whimsical, genially philosophical volume of essays, "The Little People," and by those memoirs that are at once a real addition to the history of latter-day journalism and an introduction to one of its ablest, most gracious and most interesting personalities. Mr. Whiteing is an exception among authors in that one may learn to love and admire him from his writings and then come to know him personally without losing anything whatever of that admiration or that regard.

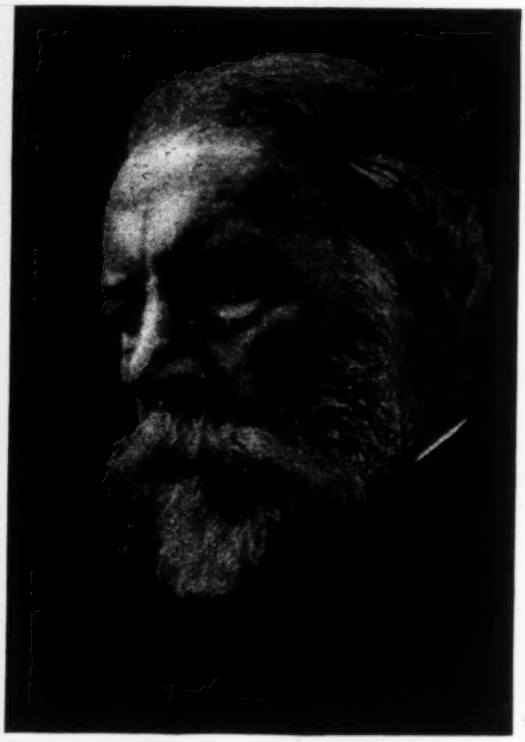


Photo by E. O. Hoppé.

Mr. Richard Whiteing.

Miss May Sinclair's new novel, "The Romantic," will be published by Messrs. Collins in September.

Having turned from the writing of fiction to war work, Mr. Keighley Snowden has now turned from war work to write the "Life of Sir Swire Smith," and the book is to make its appearance this autumn. He has treated Sir Swire Smith as an historic figure, a type of the English manufacturer during the period 1860–1914, when it may be said that Britain was teaching the use of machinery to the world—a period that will be deemed more important than that of the famous Hansa League. Swire Smith's public life was that of a pioneer educationist. Foreseeing in the sixties that Britain could not retain an industrial monopoly, he was among the first to say that we must prepare by technical instruction for a contest of brains, and that any evasion of this by tariffs would be weak and mischievous. He studied what Germany was doing in the way of technical education and founded at Keighley the first English technical school. The main interest of Mr. Snowden's biography is its unreserved revelations of a romantic personality who was said to combine the manners of a society entertainer with the zeal of a prophet. A dozen times he declined to stand for Parliament, and at last, still preferring business and his freedom, reluctantly allowed himself to be nominated and, at seventy-three, became an M.P. under protest.

Photo by Val L'estrange.

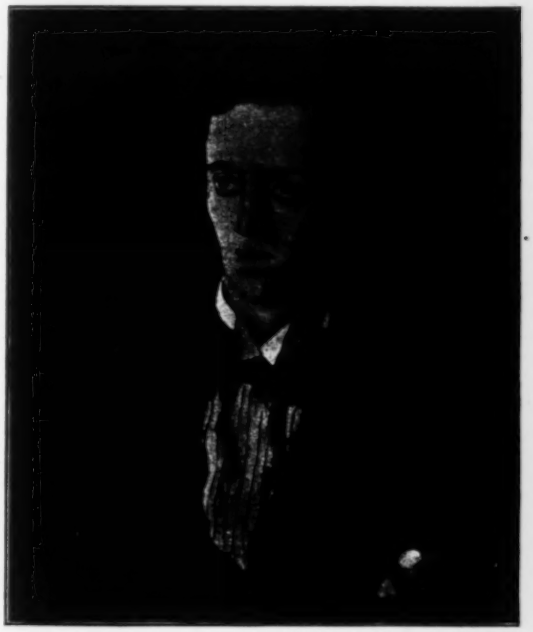
Miss Barbara Wingfield Stratford,

whose new romance of Indian life, "Beryl in India," is published by Books Limited.

Miss Sheila Kaye-Smith has finished a new novel, "Green Apple Harvest," which will be published in September.

Yet another attempt has been made to solve the Drood mystery. In "The Murder of Edwin Drood," as recounted by John Jasper, Mr. Percy T. Carden has based his conclusions mainly on Dickens's MS. and memoranda, and it is an indication that the book may be taken seriously that Mr. B. W. Matz has written an introduction. It will be published early in the autumn by Mr. Cecil Palmer.

Mr. Louis Stone, the Australian novelist, is over here just now, taking a sort of rest cure in London and renewing acquaintance with parts of England

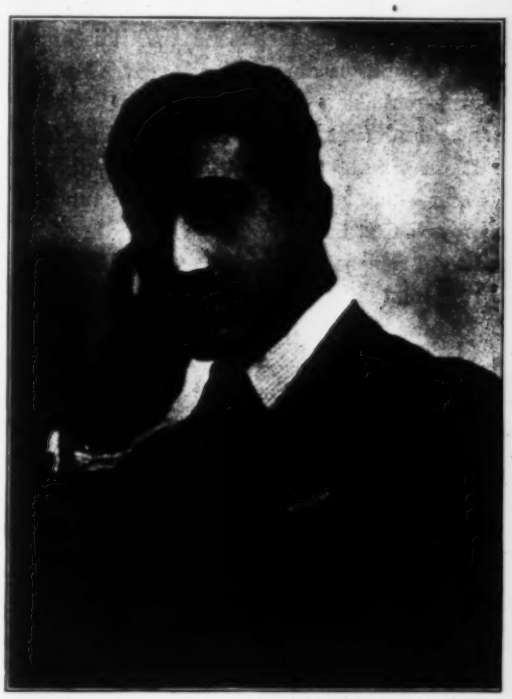


Mr. Douglas Goldring,

whose "Reputations" (Chapman & Hall) is reviewed in this Number.

From a portrait in oils by Philip Naviaski.

that he used to know, for he was born here in the Midlands, though he has been living in Sydney since he was twelve. His latest novel, "Betty Wayside," was published by Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton four years or so ago. His "Jonah" (Methuen), a realistic story of a Sydney larrikin, is acknowledged for as true a picture of present-day town life in



Mr. Michael Arlen,

whose brilliant first book, "A London Venture" (Heinemann), was recently reviewed in THE BOOKMAN. Mr. Arlen has completed a new book, "The Romantic Lady," which will be published by Mr. Heinemann in the autumn.

Australia as "For the Term of his Natural Life" and "Robbery Under Arms" are of certain aspects of the rougher side of the Australia of last century.

Mrs. Henry Dudeney's latest novel, "Candlelight" (Hutchinson), has been dramatised by Mr. Richard Pryce, and is to be produced at the Court Theatre by Lady Forbes Robertson.

From the 1st to the 31st of July the Decorative Art Group is holding an exhibition at the Dorian Leigh Galleries, in Bruton Street, Bond Street. The Group was founded to encourage the development of artistic interior decoration and to create among the public a desire for beautiful and at the same time useful things which can be purchased at moderate prices. It extends its activities to all sorts of arts and crafts, including portraiture, stage settings, and even hats and dresses. Special attention is given to the designing of textiles, and already some of the best textile designers belong to the Group. Competitions are being arranged; international relations have been established, and it is hoped to send an exhibition abroad next year. Meanwhile, this first exhibition in Bruton Street should attract the attention of all who are interested in this effort to introduce more of art into the home and every-day life. There are many well known names among the Group's first list of members, including C. R. W. Nevinson, George Sheringham, Paul Nash, E. O. Hoppé, John Everett, Reginald Higgins, Ernest Cole, Anne Estelle Rice, Nancy Smith, Kathleen Hale, etc.

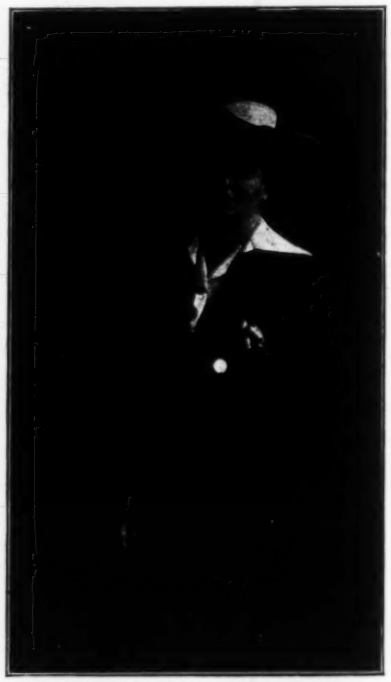


Photo by Molly Darelle. **Mrs. Alice Perrin,**
whose new novel, "The Vow of Silence," has just been published by Messrs. Cassell.

"The Charm of Oxford," by J. Wells, Warden of Wadham College, which Messrs. Simpkin, Marshall are publishing shortly, tells the story of the University and reveals the charm of its gardens and ancient buildings. The book will be illustrated with twenty-seven pencil drawings by W. G. Blackall.

Mr. George Moore has written an introduction to "The Genius of the Marne," by John L. Balderston, a play which Messrs. Allen & Unwin have in the press. Mr. Balderston is an American and a personal friend of Mr. Moore whose introduction incidentally and for the first time reveals his own views of the great war.

A painting by John Zoffany, the importance of which is certain to be recognised either side of Suez, will be offered for sale at Sotheby's this month. The known facts about its history are related at some length by Lady Victoria Manners and Dr. Williamson in their biography of the artist, reviewed in THE BOOKMAN for May. Two versions of "Colonel Mordaunt's Cock-match" have defied the ravages of time. Zoffany painted one of them for Warren Hastings and it now belongs to the Marquis of Tweeddale. But Zoffany's brush did not touch this canvas until after his return to England, and he must have relied on his recollections, sketches and notes of the sporting event which, with a numerous group of more or less eminent spectators, he depicted. The other and earlier version was unquestionably painted at Lucknow, and was kept there until, about 1817, a ruler of Oudh gave it to Mr. Richard Strachey of the Honourable Company's Civil Service, the present owner's grandfather. This is the picture that is to be sold, and the occasion should be interesting in more ways than one.

Mr. Alfred Hayes, who was the subject of a tribute in these pages some months ago, has collaborated with Mr. Edward Stirling in a four-act prose play, "The Mayflower," which is to figure prominently in the Tercentenary celebrations. Dr. Rendel Harris has written a preface for the printed version, which is to be published by Messrs. Mills & Boon.

"The Line's Engaged," a humorous story of the telephone, by Albert E. Welman, illustrated by C. A. Voigt, will be published shortly by Messrs. Jarrold.

NOTES ON NEW BOOKS.

In "The Bishop's Masquerade" (7s. 6d. net; Leonard Parsons) Mr. Harold Thomson unfolds the unconventional and amusing romance of the Right Reverend Hugh Molesley Raeburn, D.D., Bishop of Stanbury, a prelate who is handsome and comparatively young but has no predisposition to adventure off the beaten track. He is threatened with a nervous breakdown, and a specialist insists that his one chance of avoiding complete catastrophe is to throw up everything for a while, change his way of life entirely and

grow robust in body and mind by giving himself over to simple and primitive things. After some shocked objection the Bishop reluctantly yields and, following the doctor's instructions, goes to a lonely island of the outer Hebrides as a mere unclerical, impecunious wanderer. He puts up at an ungenteel inn, accepts poorly paid manual labour as his portion, and is soon stumbling and plunging into romance. For there is a beautiful girl on the island with a drunken father and a lover who has a hold upon her father and of whom she goes in dread. Moreover, a wealthy American and his daughter arrive on a visit, and the daughter not only recognises the bishop and keeps his secret but, like the other girl, falls in love with him. The specialist had not bargained for this, but it all has its share in making a man of the bishop, for it involves him in a new set of troubles and before he gets out of them he has twice taken off his coat and floored his rival in a pitched battle. The characters are well drawn, and the story a holiday story of the best kind.

"George Meredith: His Life and Friends in Relation to His Work," by S. M. Ellis (21s. net; Grant Richards), is a new and revised edition of the most intimate life of Meredith that has yet been published. Mr. Ellis is a relative of the great novelist and his book is valuable alike for its personal detail and its revelations concerning the originals of many of the characters in the novels.

"Man to Man," by John Leitch (Putnams), offers a solution of the Labour problem as it has been worked out successfully by the author for twenty large business firms. The solution is a form of co-operation. As Mr. Barnes says in an introduction, this is no mere abstract treatise, "but an actual illustration of things which have been done." We commend the book to masters and men who are looking for a common-sense way out of labour unrest, for it shows how that may be reached by making the prosperity of each side the common interest of both.

It is impossible to believe that the Chief of the Secret Police at Singapore could be quite such a joyously unadulterated ass as Lochinvar M'Whizzle, but you don't enjoy Mr. Peter Blundell's "Mr. Podd of Borneo" (6s. net; Werner Laurie) because of its probabilities but because it is riotously and ridiculously entertaining. And as the book that won the publisher's £250 prize for the best humorous novel that is what it ought to be. It is all broad farce in an unusual setting; Mr. Podd himself is a delightful creation and anybody who wants something to laugh at will get what he wants by reading about him.

THE BOOKMAN GALLERY.

ALAN GRAHAM.

AS a rule, it is easy enough to label your novels and keep them apart in their proper places. The labelling may be at times a little ambiguous, but when you describe a novel as one of character, of adventure, of sex, of sentiment, of sensation, of mystery, of crime, of politics, of high society, of low life, of humour, and so on, everybody has a sufficiently useful notion of what sort of book to expect for his money. Often, of course, several of these qualities will blend in one story, but nearly always one quality so far predominates that you have no difficulty in selecting your single word for the label.

Dickens mixed all such qualities pretty freely; but most authors are contented to work with two at a time. Sensation and sentiment are generally partners, and take it in turn to keep in the background. Mystery may get into high society, adventure into politics, and character may go with any variety. So may humour, but you seldom find humour collaborating with sensation. In fact nine sensational novelists out of ten, nowadays, seem to have no sense of humour at all, but climb among the best sellers and do very well indeed without it.

Photo by R. Bowyer, Staines. **Mr. Alan Graham.**

The worst of getting used to things happening in these ways with a certain amount of regularity is that when you come across such a novel as "Follow the Little Pictures" you don't quite know where to place it. If you had no conscience to trouble you, you might say it was a mystery story and leave it at that; for that is what it is, and the mystery is a very ingenious one and very cleverly handled. But you might as truthfully say it is a humorous story, for it is that too; and it has streaks of sentiment and sensation, and is also a story of character, which is the last thing that the majority of tales of mystery or sensation ever attempt to be. All which means that it is a rebellious novel; it

will not conform to any one label, and you can't even get over the difficulty by summarising the plot, because so much of its interest, so much of the pleasure you have in reading it, depends on the skill with which that plot is unfolded and the ease and lightness and humour with which the whole thing is told.

Suppose we say it is a story of hidden treasure and that the title is derived from the queer, cryptic symbols on the chart which indicates where that treasure is buried. That is true but does not help you much, because, after all, the chief value of the treasure is that it serves to bring together and join in a common object divers people who would not, otherwise, have met and played their parts in one of the blithest, most baffling mystery tales I have ever enjoyed. Yet some of the characters, though they are hedged about with humour from the start, seem to have the right secrecy and cunning and sinister leanings that belong to men who are responsible for mystery and sensation. You will distrust Jabez Morgan as soon as you come across him and class him as a dangerous, dishonest and unscrupulous person, only to discover in the long run that you have made a mistake. And Dougal Tanish, the choleric, outrageously bad-tempered and bad-mannered Scottish laird, would fit equally well into a humorous narrative or into one of violence and attempted murder, and here he is at home in both. It is the chance meeting with those two men and with Marigold, the laird's charming, much-enduring daughter, on board the *Sphinx*, on his passage over from America to England, that completely changes the course of Robert Seaton's life; though the hidden treasure is nothing to Robert, and you will make another mistake if you imagine that he is to fall in love with Marigold, for there is another and more charming girl waiting for him a good way ahead in the story. Of these three Robert Seaton says, "thrown thus across my path, they diverted me into mystery and adventure which but for this chance meeting I would never have known."

That mystery and adventure are the real things; there are grim, surprising episodes in the book that are thrown into higher relief by the humour with which the author leavens his characters and varies the progress of his narrative. It is a story that thrills you on one page and sets you laughing on the next, and is written with such freshness and so attractively that one is not surprised to learn that it is rapidly winning favour on both sides of the Atlantic. It deserves no less.

Nor is one surprised to hear that, first novel as it is, it was promptly accepted by the first publishers who saw it—by Messrs. Blackwood in this country and by Messrs. Little, Brown & Co. in America. That is an achievement, but then so is the book itself. If it is Mr. Alan Graham's first novel, however, it is his second book, and he has been writing almost ever since he knew which was the right end of a pen. The desire to write, he says, has always been with him. He has been unable to follow it up steadily, but even while, a good many years ago, he was studying chemistry at the Technical College in Glasgow, he used to earn pocket money by writing more or less libellous verses for the old *Glasgow Bailie;* and later the *People's Friend* became a source of income to him. More recently he contributed a long series of short stories dealing with the fortunes of a certain Araminta to the *Grand Magazine*, and a selection of these was published in volume recently by Messrs. Newnes with the title of "Araminta and the River."

At present Mr. Graham is engaged on a more serious, a much more ambitious novel, and if circumstances are propitious and leisure and the mood serve he will probably have it finished in time for publication this autumn. Meanwhile, however much one may hesitate over the precise labelling of "Follow the Little Pictures," one has no hesitation whatever in saying that the author of so ingenious and deftly written a first novel is a novelist with a future, and a future that is not far off.

F. HEATH.

AT NIGHT.

BY MURIEL ESSE.

The hot day dies; the jasmine-scented night
Steals over the vast moor, the lonely farms;
And now I put my earthly toil away—
Fade as the sunset fades out of the day,
Into the shadow of thy waiting arms.

Ache of the heart, my aching limbs have dulled.
The grass is heavy with the evening dew.
Read in my face the words I cannot frame—
I am of earth, and thou wert once the same—
I am a toiler, and my words are few.

In the great silence of the night, thine eyes
Are mirrors, in whose depths I look until
Forgetting I have failed, I think I see
What the completed Beautiful must be—
And pray what I behold, I may fulfil.

THE READER.

THE ROMANCE OF JEFFERY FARNOL.

By J. P. Collins.

NOW that Atlas is settling into his stride again, the public is better able to distinguish, let us hope, between writers who have been suckled upon print and swaddled into authorship, and those who have seen the world and found something to say. Mr. Jeffery Farnol is a healthy example of the men of action. Few of our novelists are as independent of place or period, though some admirers would territorialise him in the county of Kent, and others might pin him to the era of the gay Prince Regent. But the characteristics common to his work are racial and permanent, and he would probably declare his best asset has been a knock-about experience of life. After all, this is no new doctrine. Out of the strong cometh forth sweetness, and plenty of sound romancers have learned in the school of adversity how to put their readers in good spirits. Unchecked prosperity, as William James declared, lacks "the great initiation," and what holds good in the spiritual sphere holds equally true of imaginative writing.

Photo by E. O. Hoppé. **Jeffery Farnol.**

Certain good fairies round Mr. Farnol's cradle were none the worse for seeming otherwise. Besides a father who could infect the household with a love of books, and a mother who was all affectionate encouragement, he had this advantage in disguise, that he was born amid dingy surroundings and had to rough it. Only a loyal Midlander like the present writer, who knew his Birmingham in the seventies and eighties, is likely to strike the right balance of allowances and perceive what that environment involved. London caught our author young, but he was to have another spell of Ironopolis before he turned out into the world, like the younger Weller, to play at leapfrog with its troubles. He was luckier than some of us, for he got a chance of trying engineering; luckier still, perhaps, that he very soon left it behind. One of his few successes was to scale a factory stack for a wagered florin, and those who know what "Brum" could produce in the way of chimneys will see that here was a youngster nothing could daunt.

In the same way, no factory in brass or iron could hold a lad who was drawing audiences with story-telling, when he was not drawing caricatures. This vein of artistry was irrepressible. He tried ironwork, carpentering, jewellery, the brush, and goodness knows what else. At Westminster Art School he made a lifelong friend of Yoshio Markino, the Japanese artist, but he was shaping for deeper moorings still. He married the daughter of an American scene-painter, Mr. Hawley, and went west with them to pursue his studies in comparative indigence, or what would have proved so but for his father-in-law. Through him Farnol obtained a post in the scenic studios of the Astor Theatre, and after a deal of windmill work, proceeded to paint miles of chequered panorama as a background to prevent the fine aroma of the stage from evaporating before it crossed the footlights. In between whiles he found time to write a tale which three American firms refused, one on the ground that it was "too English and too long." Time was to bring revenges, especially in America, but not before this bad rebuff was beaten by a worse. An actor colleague took the MS. to Boston to try its luck there, but Boston lost a chance of joining the chorus of negation. For the actor brought it back, grubbier than ever; it had lain at the bottom of a trunk, forgotten and undisturbed. Not even Peter, its hero, ever had finer occasion to rail against the "cussedness" of Fate.

That tale was "The Broad Highway," and even broad highways will sometimes turn. Luckily this one, like the bells in the nursery ditty, led the author back to London. His wife, rescuing the MS. from perdition, sent it to an old friend of the Farnol family, who in a long and busy career of sporting journalism had kept his soul alive for literature. Beneath the 'prentice hand he caught the gleam of real romance, and Shirley Byron Jevons was never the man to let good work or good enthusiasm die. He offered it to Mr. Rymer, of Sampson Low, a kindred and discerning spirit, and thus the firm that found "Lorna Doone" lit upon another gem of price. Their admiration was infectious. Mr. Jevons sent me an advance copy when I was in charge of the book page of a well-known daily, with just a line to say that here was a feather for the cap of my native town. Once the first chapter was read, the recommendation was needless. I flung the bush away to enjoy the wine

XUM

the more, and in real sincerity gave it all the praise I knew on the day of publication. The worst to be said of the story of Cleone was that she hardly hove in sight until the book was nearly half-way through. But in launching the reader upon chance adventures by old-time taverns and the margins of the Kentish roads, the author had followed the vogue of Fielding and Smollett, and where shall you find better models? What is more, he had made his tale a parable of existence, where your way winds through a forest of hazards before you emerge upon sunshine and the ordered landscape of your choice, if ever. And the closing chapters that go to the winning and deliverance of Cleone mount as near to rapture as any reader well may ask, short of the eloquence of "perfect music married unto noble words."

America was just as instant to greet the new novelist, and Mr. Jenkins, of Little, Brown & Co., worked as hard for the book as Mr. Jevons and Mr. Rymer. The result is that in the west Mr. Farnol has never looked back; and in a short time he was placing serial rights with "McClure's" at fabulous rates before title was fixed or the scenario dry upon the paper. What was the reason for this simultaneous success upon both sides of the Atlantic? America was producing first-class novelists of her own, and this new-comer had never stirred a finger to touch any of the soft spots that are charged to her. Indeed, there is something truly Midland in the sturdy independence with which he followed his bent from first to last, and studied neither markets nor fashions in the framing of his work. The short cut is boldest and best in the long run. He has had no need to make a set bid for western readers, because he has gone to the true source of romance for his wizardry of scene and character, of situation and conceit. He has drawn upon the main stops of simple emotion, and has needed no other. Consciously or otherwise, he has been guided by Wordsworth's rule,

"We live by admiration, hope, and love,"

and the rest is simple. That is why the past seems merely a backcloth for projecting his creations to the focus he requires; and if ever he writes of the future, he will be well advised to remain simple and bold as ever, and true to the primary colours of villainy and virtue.

There was a time when it seemed as if Farnol took his cue from an American yarn, "Monsieur Beaucaire." The times agree, for Booth Tarkington's book came first by a decade, and there is internal evidence that "The Broad Highway" was preceded in the writing by "The Honourable Mr. Tawnish," which I take to be the slightest thing that Farnol has done, and the most reminiscent of the stage. But whether this conjecture is right or not—and there is nothing belittling about it, for "Beaucaire" is admirable feigning—there is nothing derivative about Farnol save that he has gone, as already said, to the primal sources, where Spenser and the Elizabethans went, the idyllists from Theocritus to Morris and Maeterlinck, the pastoral players and the gentler of the minstrels, the authors of "Roland" and "The Romaunt of the Rose" and "Aucassin et Nicolette." Give an audience their fill of love and fighting, of injustice and suspense, of well-planned rescue and cunningly-contrived surprise, and they will not greatly disturb themselves about the rules of probability or the "supercheries" of scholarship.

The more he plunges into the unfathomable wealth of the dark or twilight ages, the more Mr. Farnol may be trusted to perceive how they have been misdescribed by shallow knowledge, libelled by neo-sectarianism, and obscured in the crude light of the "revival of learning." The ages that built the surviving cathedrals and the abbeys long since perished, that built up a peerless code of chivalry, that waged the crusades against terrific odds of distance and of nature, and crossed the known world in every direction with a never-ending come-and-go of seafarers and merchants and craftsmen, of pilgrims and gleemen and scholars, could hardly have been the vast slough of barbarism that our present-day ignorance and pride pretend. Mr. Farnol is not above crowding his chorus with recreants and villains past redemption or the pantomime monk with the venison pie. His Latin sometimes gives us the shivers. He mixes his "thee's" and his "ye's," and precisians may murmur at his forms of archaic diction. But he never plays down to modern complacency or bigotry, and he does not burden our credulity without compensation. If, as Roosevelt said, imagination in the historian is quite compatible with minute accuracy, most readers would say that occasional looseness on points need not disturb imagination in romance. If our author makes a slip in the way of detail, or lapses into excess, he preserves the most important thing, and that is atmosphere. Above all, he keeps a gentle undertone of sanity alive and resonant, whatever the key or movement. There is always a note of gaiety reigning through his work, like a glimmer of daylight through the tree-tops, to remind you that somewhere through his favourite "boskage" the open country is awaiting us and the smiling sunset of a happy ending.

One faculty Mr. Farnol has had in his favour all along, and without it he might have failed, charm he never so wisely. The canakin may clink, and the tucket resound, till the galled jade wince, and all that. You may embroider your dialogue with time-honoured proverbs and "tushery" and snatches of old rounds and ballads. You may deck your marginal characters with all manner of ejaculation and eccentricity; but without a healthy sense of humour it must ring hollow. The greatest addition to the annals of our time—Hardy's "Dynasts"—never rises to its real dimensions on the horizon of our admiration till it brings into its survey an element of wayside comedy, and indulges the play of homely wits upon the cosmic issues going forward. Here, thanks to his first-hand study of the English roads, Mr. Farnol has been able to enliven his canvas with genial oddities like The Ancient and the Bos'un and Black George. They sweeten the stilted devilry of gentry like Chichester and Sir Maurice Vibart and Duke Ivo, and persuade us that even in sinister times the good greenwood harboured simple souls pervaded by a cheerful and reckless equanimity. There is no doubt they all make enormously for Mr. Farnol's widespread popularity. Mr. Balfour years ago put in a wholesome plea, and rightly, for a gayer note in our romances. And this power of keeping a blithe heart beating through a stirring tale is more needed nowadays than the "lovely and immortal privilege" Leigh Hunt spoke about, "that can stretch

its hand out of the wastes of time and touch our eyelids with tears."

Our author, with a decade of good work to his credit, is still a young man as writers go, and it is idle to pontificate about a man who may yet surmount his own high-water mark. There are Noctes Farnolianae to come, perhaps, which may dispense with his favourite type of high-born heroine, endowed with glamorous beauty and a commanding temper which beats itself away upon the hero's constancy of purpose. He should certainly never return to minor work like "Mr. Tawnish," "The Chronicles of the Imp" and "The Geste of Duke Jocelyn," which are the leisure rambles of a summer afternoon compared with the fortunes of Beltane or Barnabas. Only last year "Our Admirable Betty" reassured us that the author's powers remain as fertile as ever, while his grip grows firmer. The film version of "The Amateur Gentleman," which one saw on its production the other day, showed, with all the present rawness of the cinema, what a rich field for strife and surprise the Farnol novels are. He has acquired unmistakable skill in the use of what the engineer calls "baffle-plates" and artists call the conflict of emotion. It is rumoured among the gossips that Mr. Farnol is at work in a new vein which should suit him to perfection. Should he succeed, he will deserve well of us all, and if he fails, he has plenty of admirers to welcome him ashore. But he will not fail, we may depend, for want of hard work, intensity of realisation, or that vivid and devil-may-care imagination which is the province where he most excels. To frame a tale of derring-do with splendid seriousness is something, to call up a vision of womanly virtue tried and resurgent, or to interest us in the commerce and traffic of the country-side in the green heart of a typical English shire; but without the sure touch and penetration of the artist, without the easy swing of a changing narrative, the retention of the reader's interest, and the atmosphere that blends all truly, toil is apt to be thrown away. The worthy Sir Egerton Brydges was just such an example of unattaining effort. His romances are dusty and forgotten now, and hardly repay the turning over; but he had the root of the matter in him when he wrote that "nothing is so happy to itself and so attractive to others as a genuine and ripened imagination that knows its own powers, and throws forth its treasures with frankness and fearlessness." And if these are not marks of the Farnol romances, then they are beyond analysis

RHODA BROUGHTON.

BY S. M. ELLIS.

THE death of Miss Rhoda Broughton, at the age of seventy-nine, last month, marks the passing of the last of the women novelists of the mid-Victorian period. Her contemporaries, Miss Braddon, Mrs. Riddell, Miss Yonge, Miss Middlemass, and many others, are all gone now.

The daughter of a clergyman, the Rev. Delves Broughton, of Broughton Hall, Staffordshire, and granddaughter of Sir H. D. Broughton, eighth baronet, Rhoda Broughton was born in North Wales on November 29th, 1840. Her mother was Irish, a member of the Bennett family of The Grange, Birr, King's County, and daughter of George Bennett, Q.C., of 18 (now renumbered 70), Merrion Square, Dublin. Mr. Bennett's younger daughter, Susan, married Sheridan Le Fanu, the novelist, author of "Uncle Silas" and many another tale of terror. This literary connection had a good deal to do with Miss Broughton's future career as a writer. As a girl she often stayed with her uncle by marriage and her Le Fanu cousins in Dublin. Encouraged and helped by Sheridan Le Fanu she wrote her first stories, and as they progressed she would read them aloud in the evenings passed in Merrion Square to him and a few favoured guests, one of the number being Mr. Percy FitzGerald.

Photo by Bassano. **Miss Rhoda Broughton.**

These early romances of rugged heroes and unconventional heroines developed into "Not Wisely, but Too Well" and "Cometh up as a Flower," both of which were published first by Sheridan Le Fanu, in 1867, in *The Dublin University Magazine*, then his own property. He said to her: "You will succeed, and when you do, remember that I prophesied it." Le Fanu also introduced his niece to his London publisher, Bentley, and her literary position was assured after the success of "Red as a Rose is She" in 1872. It was read and praised by everybody. I remember a friend, who was a member of the same club as W. E. Gladstone, relating that on one occasion he saw the statesman, in the library, deep in the perusal of a book. Gladstone read on for a long time, and when he eventually put the book down and left the room, the engrossing volume proved to be not a work of

philosophy or classical history but—"Red as a Rose is She."

From 1878 and during the eighties, when her literary reputation was at its highest, Miss Broughton lived with her several dogs at 27, Holywell Street, Oxford. She much enjoyed the academic society of the place. She was a woman of wit and a brilliant, if somewhat caustic, conversationalist. Jowett used to invite her to dine at Balliol to meet his most distinguished guests. Unlike the majority of Oxford ladies, Miss Broughton was always well dressed. Her novel "Belinda" (1883) was a picture of Oxford society of that period, and it is supposed to include a very acute presentation of Mark Pattison, the Rector of Lincoln.

In 1890 she went to live at 1, Mansfield Place, Richmond Hill, Surrey, but ten years later she returned to Qxford. The rest of her life was passed there, at River View, Headington Hill, with lengthy visits to London, where at one time she occupied a flat at 4, Culford Mansions, Chelsea.

Altogether Miss Broughton was the author of some twenty-one successful novels—one of the best being "A Waif's Progress," which contains some very humorous character drawing. Her last book was "A Thorn in the Flesh" (1917), though I understand a posthumous novel will be published shortly.

She was a pioneer in one sense among feminine novelists because she introduced the daring unconventional heroine in fiction during a very prim period—the sixties—of Victorian life. She really shocked many readers. There is a pleasing but no doubt invented story that Miss Broughton's father forbade her to read her own books. Her style changed later on. As she herself laughingly put it: "I began life as Zola, I finish it as Miss Charlotte Yonge." That of course is an exaggeration: she never approximated to the crude realism of Zola. What is true is that the outspoken freedom and easy wit of her earlier books were succeeded by a more mordant humour, a keener dissection of the emotions and motives which sway poor humanity, and at the same time a more homely and human sentiment.

As a woman Miss Broughton's numerous friends termed her delightful, and she held a position peculiarly her own, beloved alike for herself and for her books.

COLERIDGE'S "MARINE SONNET."

By Major S. Butterworth.

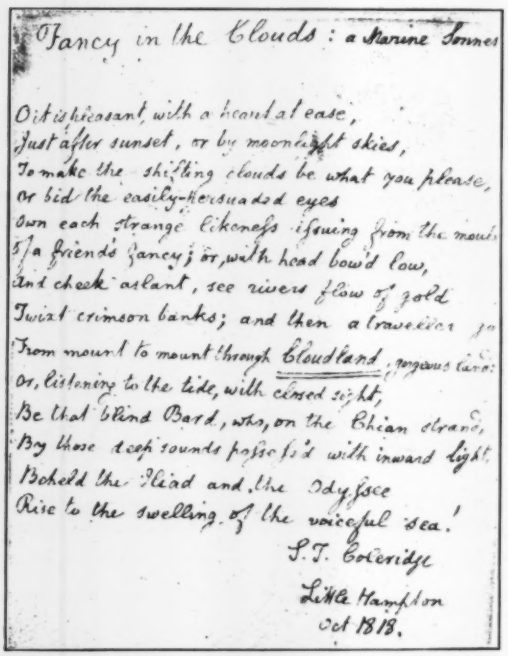
IN *Blackwood's Magazine* for November, 1819, there appeared the following sonnet, written by S. T. Coleridge:

FANCY IN NUBIBUS.

A Sonnet, composed on the Sea Coast.

"O! IT is pleasant, with a heart at ease,
Just after sunset, or by moonlight skies,
To make the shifting clouds be what you please,
Or bid the easily persuaded eyes
Own each strange likeness issuing from the mould
Of a friend's fancy; or, with head bowed low,
And cheek aslant, see rivers flow of gold
'Twixt crimson banks, and then a traveller go
From mount to mount o'er CLOUDLAND, gorgeous land!
Or listening to the tide with closed sight,
Be that blind bard, who on the Chian strand,
By those deep sounds possess'd with inward light,
Beheld the Iliad and the Odyssee
Rise to the swelling of the voiceful sea!"

S. T. COLERIDGE.


Fancy in the Clouds: a Marine Sonnet

O it is pleasant, with a heart at ease,
Just after sunset, or by moonlight skies,
To make the shifting clouds be what you please,
Or bid the easily-persuaded eyes
Own each strange likeness issuing from the mould
Of a friend's fancy; or, with head bowed low,
And cheek aslant, see rivers flow of gold
'Twixt crimson banks; and then a traveller go
From mount to mount through Cloudland, gorgeous land!
Or, listening to the tide, with closed sight,
Be that blind Bard, who, on the Chian strand,
By those deep sounds possess'd with inward light,
Beheld the Iliad and the Odyssee
Rise to the swelling of the voiceful sea!

S.T. Coleridge

Little Hampton
Oct 1818.

Photo by A. Debenham, Southsea.

Facsimile copy of Coleridge's sonnet in Lamb's handwriting.

Charles Lamb saw this sonnet in the magazine and, in his letter to Coleridge (January 10th, 1820), asks: "Who put your marine sonnet . . . into 'Blackwood'? I did not." It will be noticed that Coleridge does not call his poem a "marine sonnet," but "a sonnet composed on the Sea Coast." Lamb's reason for so calling it will be seen below, and is a proof that he was acquainted with an earlier version of the poem than that which appeared in *Blackwood's*, and which for many years was supposed to be its first appearance. Such proof is to be found in a letter written by Lamb to Coleridge earlier. The letter bears no date or postmark, so that the time when it was written is matter for conjecture. When it was first published, namely, in Talfourd's "Final Memorials of Charles Lamb," 1848, the editor placed it among the correspondence of 1829. Succeeding editors followed suit, until the late Canon Ainger altered this arrangement. In the notes to his edition of the "Letters," he states that "it certainly belongs to the year 1819, for Coleridge's sonnet was *first* [the italics are mine] printed in *Blackwood's Magazine* in November, 1819, and this copy was evidently sent to Lamb in manuscript before publication." Mr. Lucas heads the letter thus: "[No date. ? Summer, 1819.]" The late Mr. Macdonald, in his edition, places it some time in the week ending January 15th, 1820.

Subsequently to the appearance of an article on the subject contributed by the present writer to the *Athenæum* on June 21st, 1913, Mr. Macdonald, on very good grounds, gave his reason for assigning the letter to a date which can be fairly easily ascertained approximately from a letter to Wordsworth, written on February 18th, 1818.

Here is the letter that has caused so much difference of opinion, not only as to date but also as to another matter, which will be seen later:

"Dr. C. Your sonnet is capital. The Paper ingenious, only that it split into 4 parts (besides a side splinter) in the carriage. I have transferred it to the common English Paper, *manufactured of rags*, for better preservation. I never knew before how the Iliad and Odyssey were written. Tis strikingly corroborated by observations on Cats. These domestic animals, put 'em on a rug before the fire, wink their eyes up and listen to the Kettle, and then PURR, which is their Poetry.

"On Sunday week we kiss your hands (if they are clean). This next Sunday I have been engaged for some time.

"With remembces. to your good Host and Hostess,

"Yours ever,

'C. LAMB."

There have been guesses as to what this "ingenious paper" was. Talfourd said it was "some gauzy tissue paper on which the sonnet was copied"; Mr. Lucas, that it was "apparently some curious kind of paper." As they had not seen the original they can hardly be blamed for having "hazarded a wide solution." The material on which the poem is written is SEA-WEED. "I've measured it from side to side: 'tis" twelve inches long and, at its widest part, three inches. It corresponds to Lamb's description of it, for it is split into four parts besides a side splinter, as may be seen from the accompanying illustration. It has been mounted on common and coarse English paper *manufactured of rags*, and is here reproduced in facsimile.

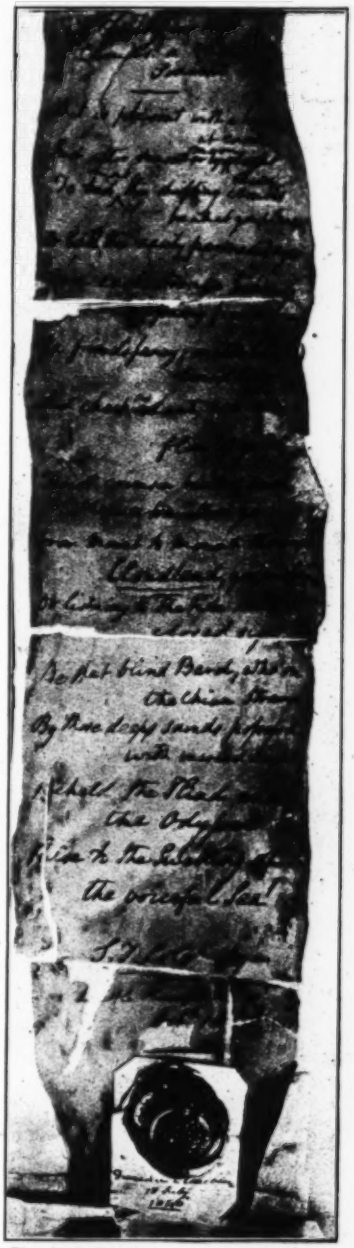
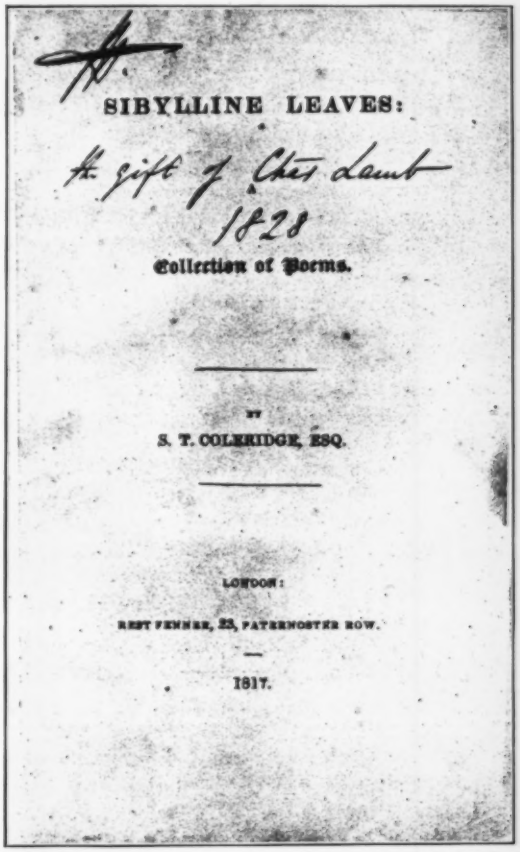


Photo by A. Debenham, Southsea. **Facsimile of the sonnet written on sea-weed.**


SIBYLLINE LEAVES:

A gift of Chas Lamb
1828

Collection of Poems.

BY

S. T. COLERIDGE, ESQ.

LONDON:

REST FENNER, 23, PATERNOSTER ROW.

1817.

Photo by A. Debenham, Southsea. **Facsimile title page.**

At the bottom there is the seal of Donald Macbean—with the date 18 July, 1846—upon whose identity I can throw no light.

In a copy of Coleridge's "Sibylline Leaves," which was in Lamb's possession, and is now, along with the sea-weed sonnet, in my treasured keeping, the sonnet has been transcribed, and this transcription is in Lamb's unmistakable handwriting. Apparently he has taken upon himself to alter the punctuation here and there. It will be noticed that Coleridge has dated the sonnet October, 1818. This date is certainly wrong, for the poem appeared for the first time in print in *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal*, February 7th, 1818, the proprietor and printer of which was John Mathew Gutch, who was a schoolfellow of Lamb and Coleridge at Christ's Hospital. The title under which the sonnet appeared in that journal is: "Fancy in Nubibus. A Sonnet composed by the Seaside, October, 1817." When it was collected by Coleridge with his other poems in 1828, the title, or rather, the sub-title, was again varied, for in that edition it was called: "Fancy in Nubibus, or the Poet in the Clouds." It is only in the sea-weed version that it is entitled "a Marine Sonnet." The bibliographical details of dates of composition, publication, etc., will be found in the table on the next page:

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Date of Composition.	Date of Publication.	Journals, &c., in which the Poem appeared.	Title.
October, 1817, at Littlehampton.			"Fancy in the Clouds": a Marine Sonnet.
	February 7th, 1818	*Felix Farley's Bristol Journal*	"Fancy in Nubibus": a Sonnet composed by the Seaside, October, 1817.
	November, 1819	*Blackwood's Magazine*	"Fancy in Nubibus": a Sonnet composed on the Sea Coast
	1828	"Poetical Works of S. T. Coleridge"	*"Fancy in Nubibus, or the Poet in the Clouds."

* The title which has been retained.

As to the date of the letter in which Lamb acknowledges the sonnet, it was written probably either at the end of January or beginning of February, 1818, as in the letter to Wordsworth referred to above, which is dated February 18th, 1818, Lamb tells him that he "dined with S. T. C. at Gilman's a Sunday or two since."

There is an interesting association connected with Lamb's copy of the "Sibylline Leaves," which was presented, presumably, to the person whose initials appear on the title page. These I make out to be "J. H. P.," in all likelihood, John Howard Payne, the author of the opera of which the song, "Home Sweet Home," is the only number now remembered. Lamb first met Payne at Kenney's when he and Mary visited France in 1822, and there are several letters written to him by Lamb, and one written by Payne to the latter was printed in *Scribner's Magazine* in December, 1915.

THE BOOKMAN PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

JULY, 1920.

Answers to these competitions (each on a separate sheet bearing the name and address of the sender) should be forwarded not later than the 14th of the month to

"The Prize Page," THE BOOKMAN, Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton, Ltd., Warwick Square, London, E.C.4.

Colonial and foreign readers please note that Competitions II., IV. and V. are the same each month, and that for the next two months the first prize will be for the best original lyric.

SPECIAL NOTICE.—*Competitors must please keep copies of their verses; the Editor cannot undertake to return them.*

I.—A PRIZE OF ONE GUINEA is offered for the best *original* lyric.

II.—A PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA is offered for the best quotation from English verse applicable to any review or the name of any author or book appearing in this number of THE BOOKMAN. Preference will be given to quotations of a humorous nature.

III.—A PRIZE OF THREE NEW BOOKS is offered for the best account in not more than two hundred words of anything seen or heard (in the way of incident, anecdote or local legend) during a holiday spent at home or abroad.

IV.—A PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA is offered for the best review, in not more than one hundred words, of any recently published book. Competitors should give the names of Authors and Publishers at head of review.

V.—A copy of THE BOOKMAN will be sent *post free* for *twelve months* to the sender of the best suggestion for THE BOOKMAN Competitions. The Editor reserves the right to use any suggestion submitted.

RESULTS OF COMPETITIONS FOR JUNE.

I.—THE PRIZE OF ONE GUINEA for the best original lyric is awarded to A. Phillpotts, of Eltham Torquay, for the following:

SONG OF PAN.

Long ago, with flocks returning
In the twilight, my heart burning—
For the wood nymph Syrinx yearning—
Through the bracken softly peeping,
I beheld my beauty sleeping:
Lovely as the early morning;
Like a flower the grass adorning.

Pressing back the ferns around her,
In my gentle arms I wound her;
She was mine, because I found her.
But alas! in terror waking,
From my sweet caresses breaking,
Like a startled fawn she fled me—
On and ever onward led me.

Syrinx! Syrinx! madly speeding,
Stay! Thy little feet are bleeding—
But she minded not my pleading;

Miss Vera Lovich,

whose new novel, "Passion's Ques'," an unconventional story of married life, has just been published by Messrs. Selwyn & Blount.

Flying on up dale and dingle
Where the mountain runnels mingle;
Round the foothills through the heather,
Like a sunbeam, like a feather.

Tiring once, her torn feet stumbled
As the earth beneath them crumbled,
And upon the rock she tumbled.
Then I heard her cry as, staring,
With her frightened fingers tearing
The rude stones, she rose, and faster
Flew—but I had nearly passed her.

Then she stopped! I saw her shiver,
Saw her fluttering eyelids quiver:
Lo! Before her shone a river.
She must either, wildly springing,
In the stream her body flinging,
Perish where the water races,
Or be lost in my embraces.

"Naiads! Naiads! Are ye sleeping?
See! I trust me to your keeping!"
Cried she, in the river leaping.
Swift, I spread my arms and caught her,
As she touched the broken water;
But the nymphs had heard her gasping . . .
Hollow reeds behold me clasping!

Syrinx! Syrinx! in the river,
I will leave thee never, never—
Thou shalt be my voice for ever.
On thy lips my rude lips pressing
I will breathe through thee a blessing,
And in music thou replying,
Earth shall love me for thy sighing.

We also select for printing:

PILGRIMAGE.

Beyond the night, beyond the dawn, beyond our life's ephemeral day,
Towards some far, unglimpséd bourne, groping, we journey on our way,
With dim eyes striving to the light, hands that entreat the relentless years,
Feet that have faltered in the fight, hearts that have cowered to craven fears.

Beyond the abyss of our unfaith, beyond the griefs that bow the head,
Our souls, light-wingéd as love's wraith, throng with the all too living dead.
With them possess the eternal fields, and, 'ere the shrouding mist steal up,
Drown, in a peace unfathoméd, as flowers within a wine-brimmed cup.

When the last moon shall falter down and no light answer from the east,
Whose hands shall raise the immortal crown, and who shall set the honeyed feast?
What music wake upon the wind that drifts we know not how nor whence,
Whose bounty shall our eyes unbind that we may know life's recompense?

Beyond the impatience of our breath, a quiet folding of the hands,
Beyond the darkness we call death, the magic of the unknown lands,
Beyond the surge of our unrest, the fragrance of the mystic rose,
And sleep upon the Eternal Breast, sleep without dreams? . . . who knows . . . who knows!

(G. Laurence Groom, 52, Lodge Drive, Palmer's Green, N. 13.)

Mr. John Haslette Vahey,

whose "Johnnie Maddison" has just been reissued by Mr. John Murray in a cheap edition. Mr. Haslette Vahey has recently been demobilised and is resuming his literary work.

We also select for special commendation the lyrics by F. W. Kulicke (Pyrgos, Greece), J. Scott (Cheltenham), L. Yarde Bunyard (Allington), Violet Walker (Whitehaven), W. N. Davis (Cardiff), Gladys M. Salter (Southend), John A. Bellchambers (London, N.), Lucy Malleson (London, W.), John Peterson (Aberdeen), J. O. Dwyer (Harrogate), Nancy Pollok (Glasgow), Faith Hearn (Florence), Fredk. J. Webb (Tottenham), L. M. Priest (Norwich), L. C. (Pretoria), L. J. Richards (Jarrow), H. P. Kingston (Willenhall), E. M. H. Harington (Folkestone), M. E. Morris (Torquay), Eileen Carfrae (London, S.W.), Mary C. Mair (Guildford), M. F. H. Coney (London, W.), Rachael Bates (Great Crosby), Lettie Cole (Pontrilas), Margaret Malim (Rochdale), A. Eleanor Pinnington (Exeter), R. Scott Frayn (Timperley), Phyllis Erica Noble (London, E.), Kathleen Ida Noble (London, E.), Olive Robinson (Gainsborough), Mariquita Guitierrez (San Sebastian, Spain), A. Le Poidevin (Guernsey), D. M. Bellinghurst (West Kensington), Reginald Gray (Darlington), Reginald Peirson (Wandsworth), Ruth Wainwright (Hove), G. M. Salter (Westcliff-on-Sea), Doris Westwood (Sutton Coldfield), Ivy Clark (Sydenham), J. D. Ware (Ilfracombe), Mary E. Steel (Darlington), R. A. Joseph (Meliden), Arthur R. Taylor (Birmingham), Margaret Gladys Allen (Keighley), Mary Deane (Holland Park), K. R. A. (Edinburgh), C. Burton (Upper Norwood), Hilda C. Brighouse (Eccles), W. Nightingale Brown (Manchester), Rachel Swete Macnamara (New Milton), F. Davidson (Bryansford).

II.—THE PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA for the best quotation is awarded to Annie A. Robinson, of 3, Penn Lea Road, Weston, Bath, for the following:

HUMAN NATURE IN BUSINESS.
BY F. C. KELLY. (Putnams.)
"First show me your penny."
SIMPLE SIMON, *Nursery Rhyme.*

We also select for printing:

ADVENTURES IN INTERVIEWING.
BY ISAAC F. MARCOSSON.
(John Lane.)
"Be off or I'll kick you downstairs."
LEWIS CARROLL, *You are old Father William.*

(J. S. Collins, 7, Pagoda Avenue, Richmond, Surrey.)

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FIVE YEARS' HELL IN A COUNTRY PARISH.
By Rev. Edward Fitzgerald Synnott.
(Stanley Paul.)

"I am ready to depart."
Walter Savage Landor, *Finis.*

(Maude R. Fleeson, 26, Chatham Grove, Withington, Manchester.)

PASSENGER. By Helen Dircks.
(Chatto & Windus.)

"They returned from the ride,
With the Lady inside,
And a smile on the face of the Tiger."
Lear's *Nonsense Rhymes.*

(L. H. Freeman, 75, Paisley Road, West Southbourne, Hants.)

DIAGNOSIS. By Frederick Watson.

"A dozen men sat on his corpse,
To find out why he died."
Thomas Hood, *Faithless Nellie Gray.*

(Sara H. Poe, Homewood, Swaffham, Norfolk.)

III.—There seems to be little variety in the way of holidays available to a poor bookman. Nine competitors out of ten send him to remote rural places where he could not spend money even if he had it. One offers him the excitement of joy-riding round the country in char-a-bancs but is vague about the tariff; several recommend him to go harvesting or working on the land for a change. The Prize of Three New Books is awarded to Dorothy Child, of 48, Havelock Street, Canterbury, for the following, which keeps an eye on the poor bookman's pocket as well as on the scenery:

AN INEXPENSIVE HOLIDAY FOR A POOR BOOKMAN.

I can suggest an inexpensive and enjoyable holiday for a "poor bookman" if he can take it during the last week of August and the first week of September. He could go to a farm in the Weald of Kent and spend the first week in harvesting and the second week in hop-picking. Should he choose Tenterden, he could arrange with one of the farmers there to accommodate him and could pack his luggage, including a few books for wet days, and set off. During the first week he will become initiated into, and enjoy, the art of haymaking, and will sleep and eat like a farmer's boy. The orchards will be at his disposal and in them he will find apples, pears and plums in their most luscious state. The next week, in the hop-gardens, he may earn sixpence for every bushel he picks. The scent of the hops will probably make him exceedingly drowsy but he will sleep long and sound each night. Change of surroundings and the open-air life will have proved a real holiday and at the end of the fortnight he will return home with a renewed store of health and thoughts.

We also specially commend the papers by Gladys M. E. Leigh (Birmingham), M. M. Priestly (Malvern), Gwendolen Leijonhufoud (Bournemouth), M. I. Machar (Castle Eden), Rowland W. Pask (Darlington), Winifred Herrington (Reading), E. B. Schiff (Crawley), B. Noel Saxelby (Manchester), H. Dalton Vesey (Leytonstone), J. A. Jenkins (Liverpool), Grace G. Webb (Southam), A. B. Hindmarsh (Hartlepool).

IV.—The Prize of Half a Guinea for the best review in not more than a hundred words is awarded to Mrs. M. J. Eayres, 27, Harold Road, Hornsey, N.8, for the following:

THE VANITY GIRL. By H. Compton Mackenzie.
(Cassell.)

Compton Mackenzie's "Vanity Girl" is remarkable in one way only: it is readable, even fascinating, in spite of its uninteresting characters. The heroine, recruited from Kensington to the stage, differs from her companions by no subtle results of upbringing and environment, but by extreme self-interest. She achieves her success and marriage by her beauty alone. Through all her experiences she remains the same unemotional, uninspiring doll, and her last act is just the final exasperation to readers. Perhaps the novel owes its attraction to the everchanging scene, perhaps to Compton Mackenzie's skill as a story-teller.

We also select for printing:

PRELUDE. By Beverley Nichols.
(Chatto & Windus.)

This is not an ordinary school story, neither is the hero an average hero. It is an interesting study of a distinctly original but not unfamiliar type of boy who makes his own world of music and poetry to the entire exclusion of games. "He knew how to talk but he couldn't shout, he could dance but he couldn't run," and altogether the first impression of Paul Trevelyan is not favourable. Perhaps therein lies the greatest merit of the book, for as the story gradually unfolds, so the charming personality of Paul shines through the somewhat exotic atmosphere of "Prelude."

(E. M. Liddell, Shirenewton Hall, Chepstow.)

THE CAMP OF FEAR. By Leslie Gordon.)
(Hodder & Stoughton.)

Contrary to time-worn usage, the familiar figures of criminal gangs and astute detectives are absent from this refreshing mystery story, whilst we are further indebted to the author for a distinctly novel theme. Five people, one of them the possessor of a priceless diamond, retreat to a lonely island, to protect the jewel from the persistent designs of a mysterious marauder. Bewildering adventures culminate in murder and suicide, when the criminal is unmasked, and we realise how skilfully our suspicions have been misdirected. Mr. Gordon's entertaining art cleverly keeps the reader fascinated and perplexed till the end of an excellently devised story.

(Sidney S. Wright, 12, Swanley Lane, Swanley, Kent.)

We select for special commendation the reviews sent by Angela Cave (Bournemouth), W. Curran Reedy (Forest Gate), E. B. Durrant (Hampstead), Mrs. John Adams (Hampstead), Florence Dunford (Newcastle-on-Tyne), Maud R. Fleeson (Manchester), May W. Harrison (Lincoln), M. C. Barnard (London, W.), J. Scott (Cheltenham), G. Ralton Barnard (York), W. Swayne Little (Dublin), Kathleen Mounsey (Bath), Gladys M. E. Leigh (Birmingham), N. A. Cooper (London, S.W.), A. W. McDonald (Ardrossan), T. W. H. Hunt (Bury St. Edmunds).

V.—The Prize of One Year's Subscription to The Bookman is awarded to Margaret Fountain, of Upton, Huntingdon.

A NOTE ON THE WORK OF BERTA RUCK.

IN considering the various successes in the fiction of the day one is repeatedly driven to ask oneself: "Wherein does the secret lie? What makes these books so popular?"

Often enough the question is easy to answer. There has lately arisen a formula which of itself almost seems to guarantee success. This formula may be called the Formula of Dislike, Hate, or Indignation, and the

method it adopts is the method of attack. Perhaps this is not to be wondered at. Our age is the most troubled age that ever was, nothing is taken for granted, there is no institution, convention, or service the very foundations of which are not being called into question. One young man, by temperament totally unfitted for the Navy, nevertheless goes into it, doesn't like it, comes out again, and writes a book about it. Another sees, as a spectator, a good deal of the fighting in France, arrives at certain conclusions, and straightway prints them. A third, from the same point of view, makes an onslaught on our public school system. A fourth and a fifth and a sixth arraign the whole question of marriage as it is. All these—possibly rightly, if we accept Poe's dictum that the first function of criticism is to destroy—are evidences of the spirit that is abroad. These are all critical books. They are destructive books. They are popular books.

But there is to-day another form of success the methods of which are in direct opposition to these. The formula is less obvious, if indeed there is a formula at all. How are we to account for the increasing popularity of such a writer as the subject of this note?

Photo by E. O. Hoppé.

"Berta Ruck."

Miss Berta Ruck seems to attack nothing, seems to evince no hatred. She seems to leave institutions alone, and to accept the large conventions as they are. In place of indignation she has simply interest. So various do these interests appear to be that in a series of novels the extent of which is practically contemporaneous with the war, a different interest is exploited in each one. Thus, in her first book, "His Official Fiancée," published in the spring of 1914, the key to success is found in the delicate working-out of a pure comedy plot. In "The Lad with Wings" the sense of the then new adventures of the air furnishes the guide to popularity. In "The Land-girl's Love Story" one of Berta Ruck's most marked characteristics is very much in evidence—the love of outdoor scents and colours, of flowers and birds and streams, of brown faces and the gleam of limbs in the sunshine. In "In Another Girl's Shoes," a story which for light comedy is comparable to "His Official Fiancée," she exploits the feminine delights of Paris shopping, while in "The Girls at His Billet," a story as insubstantial as gossamer, it is almost impossible to say where the charm lies.

This avoidance of the methods of attack which distinguishes her from so many of her contemporaries is probably purely instinctive in the writer. Very likely she has never written the words Patriotism, Honour, or Good Manners, but in every book she has written she shows these qualities at work; in this she is a link between the Dead Army and the new democracy. She is able to carry over those codes and traditions and standards of conduct of the former to the gallant young subalterns who joined up at the beginning of the war; she is a vehicle for women's traditions also. The polo-playing lad fresh from Sandhurst and the civilian officer on his six-weeks' course of intensive war-training both acknowledge her. The girl who goes to the hills for the hot weather and the girl who filled shells at Woolwich or Birmingham meet in Berta Ruck.

Naturally, these things of themselves do not entirely account for her increasing influence to-day. A wide experience of human nature and human circumstances is required in addition. This Berta Ruck has. For she has had to work hard for her success. For many years before the publication of "His Official Fiancée" she had been learning her trade in that hardest and most practical of schools, journalism. In that school nothing drops into anybody's mouth; nothing is "fluke." You get what you earn and no more, generally less. Miss Ruck has put into the mouth of her Mrs. Cartwright of "The Disturbing Charm" some of her difficulties of this period—the inexorable necessities of time, the heart-breaking problem of how a thousand-word subject has to be condensed into a hundred-word paragraph, the strain of writing constantly, fluently and with zest on subjects that interest their writer not in the slightest degree; the torture of the sudden note that informs the author that her work "fails to grip." This is hard discipline, but it makes for ease of style for those who survive it.

It also brings knowledge of all sorts and conditions of people, their daily lives, hopes, ambitions and manners of speech. These Berta Ruck carefully studied, with the result that she knows, as do few of her contemporaries, the lives of young people who also have to earn their living, including the class known as the New Poor. Of her young women at any rate there is not one whose daily life Berta Ruck could not describe in detail from the moment of her rising to the time of her going to bed. She knows the homes they come from, the offices in which they work, their luncheon-places, their gossip between duties, their tea-haunts, their return by tube or bus or tram. Of every girl in her books she knows each garment in her wardrobe, whether described or not. She knows all about their summer holidays by wood and shore, their economies in order to give little graceful presents, and if she does not know literally hundreds of their love stories, it is not for want of being confided in.

These confidences frequently take the form of letters. Her post-bag shows how many strangers from the most unexpected places claim her as a friend. Except that the writers are her friends and that the letters come under the protection of friendship, the publication one day of these would throw a quite interesting sidelight on some of the democratic questions of the day. The lighter aspects also are not lacking, as in the case of the old lady from a remote village who, having failed to obtain her copy of a Sunday paper containing a Berta Ruck serial, naïvely begged the authoress to copy out that particular instalment in her own hand. No one with a journalistic training will require to be told the significance of these letters as an index of popularity. For one person who takes trouble to write such a letter there are always a thousand who don't. The observant

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critic of social conditions knows this, whether the literary one always realises it or not, and there is many a political vote-trawler who would be glad of Berta Ruck's assistance.

But perhaps a deeper reason for her increasing popularity has not been touched upon yet. Hard work and observation alone are insufficient to account for it. What then lies behind?

In the present writer's opinion this can be summed up in the single word—Affection. She exchanges that already mentioned formula of Attack and Dislike for something that is probably not a formula at all, but something that is innate, that reconciles those diverse interests of "His Official Fiancée," "The Years for Rachel" and the other books. Behind all alike this affection is to be found. To one of her unseen correspondents Berta Ruck wrote: "I think I do 'realise,' since you ask me; when writing, I see always the young faces that will be bent above the page." This is so. She is more than interested in these young people; she loves them. And they know it. They go to her books because there they see themselves limned by a sympathetic hand. Her early training as an art student is perhaps responsible for her love of the beauty of the young form, of the texture and contour of the young face. She sees the comeliness in them all; she delights in tiny physical details of colouring, of hair, of expression, and she can reproduce pictures of what has so pleased her eyes. More, she defends these young people of hers from the charges so commonly made against them of brusquerie, hardness and lack of manners. It is here that her reliance on the old tradition comes in. Her young people may adopt a newer, less courteous form of slang in their speech, but to her as to them, this is a superficiality only: the underlying qualities of respect for age, consideration for equals, and gentle instincts remain unchanged. She notices, not only when a man offers a woman his seat in the bus, but when a girl does the same for an older person of either sex. This it is that makes her a link between the old and the new.

Photo by John Trevor

"Berta Ruck" and "Oliver Onions"
(Mr. and Mrs. George Oliver).

Always, however, she keeps up to date. Never could you mistake one of her characters for a study from memory of some girl who went to school in the nineteenth century. Atmosphere, dress, speech, interests, are always of the moment; but the aspects of that moment are invariably the pleasant aspects. Her dislikes she may have; one realises them by her omission to speak of them, and here again she makes an offering to those who look to her for entertainment. Those who sometimes despair of Democracy cannot realise to the full its instinctive turning to the light and beautiful things of life, its colour, its sweetness, its fragrance. We sometimes say of the writer who supplies this need that he "takes people out of themselves." Berta Ruck does not take her readers out of themselves. She enters into and shares their lives. She can express what they feel but cannot express. She is their common denominator for Romance. As an indication of how little Miss Ruck allows to intervene between herself and her subject we may note that she never writes a synopsis. She allows her people to take the story into their own hands as living people do.

"How do I know what my characters are going to do until they do it?" she asks. And so her stories are "freshly fresh and newly new." They are as fresh as her landscape, which is always sparkling and fragrant.

And is not such an attitude as has been described of at least as much value as a *succès de scandale* that is obtained by attacking a Service, an institution, or a whole generation? Does it not, by its appeal to the individuals of whom, after all, Democracy is composed, actually take us a little farther on the road to the Reconstruction of which we all talk so much? And as sympathetic understanding is always of more value than mere anger, are not these books therefore a valid document of the times? And when such a writer sells widely, can these sales be regarded as a mere unrelated phenomenon?

Many people, neither unlettered nor yet "literary snobs," do not think so. Rather they think that in the truest sense it is the success of the writer who lacks this sympathy and large affection that is the phenomenon. Perhaps this cannot be better expressed than in the words Miss Ruck herself used in a moment of frankness to a doctrinaire who was in the act of embarking on a tide of patronage of which the ripples consisted of the adjectives "sprightly," "sugary," "vivacious," etc.

"Don't begin to talk like that," she said. "When you come to think of it I am quite as good as lots of people who can't sell a copy!"

A. O. I.

New Books.

THINGS SEEN.*

If Mr. Kipling had kept to journalism—! That is one of the really exciting conditionals of literary annals. We have had many men of letters who have been journalists, or written in newspapers. Some seem more entirely journalist than anything else, like Defoe: others were bad journalists, like George Meredith; others superior journalists, like Andrew Lang. Kipling is different. Even now, I feel, every young journalist must read his "stuff" with envy: although no man shows less of the faults of journalism (in his prose) when he shakes off the cloak of copy, no one can write more essential journalism, matter which really reeks of the moment, which is the crying need and the lasting fault of all capable journalism.

This new book is reprinted journalism. Some of it is very good—supremely good descriptive work: work which makes the writing of our descriptive reporters, even the most famous and flamboyant and fascinating, seem like coloured cotton-wool. Mr. Kipling's eye is infallible, his nose cannot be deceived, and he has the ear of the night-bird for the little sounds in the dark, the dry rustle of leaves or the panting throb of some scared heart. A good deal of the book is transitory, transitory in feeling, one hopes, and certainly not final in judgment. When Mr. Kipling wrote the first part of "From Tideway to Tideway" he was feeling very angry with America and the Americans, and he lets his anger have vent in some foolish, and some shrewd criticism. Perhaps his case against America is put when I say that I am afraid the Americans were more annoyed at the shrewd than at the foolish criticism. A pleasanter result of this mood was his sunny attitude to Canada, an attitude which is still preserved in the "Return to the Family," written some fifteen years later. He and Sir Gilbert Parker are almost alone among our writers in appreciating the romance of the oldest Colony. Mr. Kipling has his prejudices about the French Canadian; but it is good to find him admitting that "it must be worth something to say your prayers in a dialect of the tongue that Virgil handled; and a certain touch of insolence, more magnificent and more ancient than the insolence of present materialism, makes a good blend in a new land." The third series in the volume—written in 1913—is the weakest, not, I think, because the papers are later, but because the subject unfortunately lends itself to Mr. Kipling's worse faults. He cannot write about Egypt in any but an aggravating manner, and here I do not refer to his political manner, but to a certain aggressive Europeanism which has shown itself in some of his tales about Egypt, and is hardly ever present in his stories about India. Anubis and Horus enrage him, while Brahma and Buddha have always fascinated him.

The book is full of politics, and this is not the place to deal with them: but perhaps it is permissible to quote one really shrewd sentence, and ask Mr. Kipling to what Irish address he would have sent it any time the last fifty years. He is congratulating the Canadians in that they did not—like some others (poor America!)—"volunteer that their country was 'law-abiding'"; and he goes on:

> "You know the first sign-post on the Great Main Road: 'When a woman advertises that she is virtuous, a man that he is a gentleman, *a community that it is loyal*, or a country that it is law-abiding—go the other way!'"

It is not for the politics that the book will be read. They only serve to remind the reader that the papers are the product of moods, rather than of conviction; and those who delight in Kipling will keep the book for the sake of its sudden vision, its clear-eyed disillusionment, its gay and arrogant impatience with certain types of thought. Mr. Kipling making pictures is one of the most entrancing things in the world of letters, and here is the kind of pictures he can still make:

> "There are many local gods on the roads through the Rockies: old bald mountains that have parted with every shred of verdure and stand wrapped in sheets of wrinkled silver rock, over which the sight travels slowly as in delirium; mad, horned mountains, wreathed with dancing mists; low-browed and bent-shouldered faquirs of the wayside, sitting in meditation beneath a burden of glacier-ice that thickens every year; and mountains of fair aspect on one side, but on the other seamed with hollow sunless clefts, where last year's snow is blackened with the year's dirt and smoke of forest fires. The drip from it seeps away thro' slopes of unstable gravel and dirt, till, at the appointed season, the whole half-mile of undermined talus slips and roars into the horrified valley."

In its certainty, its firm outline and sense of reality, Mr. Kipling's descriptive work is still unequalled: and this volume contains a little of his best.

R. ELLIS ROBERTS.

* "Letters of Travel." By Rudyard Kipling. 7s. 6d. net. (Macmillan.)

THE LONDON LYRIST.*

Here is Mr. Birrell back among the books he should never have left. We intend, of course, no reproach of political failure—indeed, if what is happening in Ireland now is to be regarded as success, let us hope for many more such failures. What we complain of is not Mr. Birrell's alleged political failure, but his undoubted political success. He was kept away from us too long, and at too great a cost to letters. The game of politics is most successfully played by supermen like Mr. Gladstone, or by fanatics like Lord Robert Cecil, or by agile opportunists like ——, or by coarse-fibred, insensitive gladiators like ——, or by raucous windbags like —— (the obvious names will leap to the mind). Now Mr. Birrell is not a superman, or a fanatic, or a gladiator, or a time-server, or a barnstormer. He has his defects—he is capable of making howlers in matters of fact, as no doubt he has already been reminded by some "damned good-natured friends," and by some who are neither of the last two; but he certainly hasn't the defects that make politicians prosperous; and so "the holy Luthers of the preaching North" who broke George Wyndham's heart found no difficulty in adding Mr. Birrell to their list of Irish failures.

The outstanding quality in Mr. Birrell is simply charm spiced with freakish humour. He has in his composition a deal of Puck and something of the Shorter-Catechist, together with the courtesy of an older day humanised by the attractive foibles of a bookworm. He might be a character out of Anatole France; and, if it be not treason to envisage such a fate for an ex-Minister, a Privy Councillor, a Fellow of Trinity Hall and a Bencher of the Inner Temple, we can see Mr. Birrell presiding over a corner shop in the King's Road or Cheyne Walk, the best second-hand bookseller that ever was. He would persuade us to buy the hearty, cheerful, personal books as irresistibly as his essays now persuade us to read them.

In Frederick Locker-Lampson, who was dilettante, collector, Admiralty clerk, amateur of light verses and our author's own father-in-law, Mr. Birrell has a subject made to his hand, a subject, in fact, already used in the essay called "A Connoisseur." The discerning reader will not fail to notice the identity of certain choice paragraphs. In the present volume, a roomy companionable quarto that Frederick Locker himself would not have disdained, Mr. Birrell expatiates at large, and relies for corroboration upon a choice of letters both to and from our London Lyrist. So pervasive is Mr. Birrell's humour that it manages to suffuse the letters (as he chooses them) even of men as noted as Dickens, Tennyson, Browning, Ruskin, Thackeray and Calverley. As Mr. Birrell remarks

* "Frederick Locker-Lampson: A Character Sketch." By the Right Hon. Augustine Birrell. 25s. net. (Constable.)

XUM

in another publication, the letters that a man receives are perhaps more significant of his character than those he writes. Locker certainly seems to have had the gift of extracting unconscious revelations from his correspondents, and so the reader who requires short views of eminent Victorians can hardly do better than turn to these few pages of letters, most of which, ostensibly, are no more than acknowledgments of gift volumes, usually "London Lyrics." They may in fact be taken as guides in moments of epistolary embarrassment. Thus, if you are a rival belles-lettrist, simmering with jealousy, how are you to thank the other fellow for a copy of his hated verses? This is one way:

"Athenæum,
"*December 3rd*, 1857.

"DEAR LOCKER,—Many thanks for 'London Lyrics.' Which I think shew a lively and graceful fancy and command of good idiomatic English. The book is also capitally got up so as to make a pretty Christmas present.

"Ever truly yours,
"A. HAYWARD."

Could a whole biography be more illuminating? Abraham Hayward was a sort of professional diner-out, and probably a person of importance in his day, though of none in this. His essays occur in catalogues (marked low), and I think he translated "Faust." But many have done that.

And if you are a father, and have a son, aged seventeen, at Eton, who persists in sending you heroically bad verses, how would you suppress him without hurting his feelings? Here is one way:

"MY DEAR BOY,—I have read your verses several times and *they interest me very much*. Your metre rather reminds me of the metre in which Macaulay wrote his 'Armada'; but you have not made it so regular as he did. I do not know if you did this on purpose, but if you did I like his way of writing it better than yours. . . . I do not quite understand the meaning of the line:

"'And were in good sooth cursing,'

and in fact the last three lines of the poem want clearness—you say:

"'I did end their struggles.'

Do you mean you put them out of pain by killing them? Try and get the 'Armada' and read it well, and please send me back the Verses, and on another piece of paper write them out in prose, as clearly as you can, so that I may know exactly what you mean. . . .

"Your affectionate Father."

Later he complains that the bardling chooses rather violent subjects, and he goes on to say:

"You should write in a very simple metre—& thus you would gradually get a power of expressing your thoughts clearly and forcibly. Now the following is a complete poem:

"'Mrs. Boem
Wrote a poem
In praise of Teignmouth air,
Mr. Boem
Read that poem,
And built a cottage there.'

Yes, that, as far as it goes, is perfectly clear and complete, & could not possibly be better expressed—write something like it.

"Your loving,
"F. L. L."

But the obstinate youth wrote nothing like it. What he wrote was this kind of thing:

"and shadowy waves
Roll on the ocean of men's minds
And rise and break and utter thoughts in verse;"

and now he is a Unionist Member of Parliament, and a Private Secretary to boot. These warnings are not lightly to be disregarded.

As for the character sketch itself, it is in Mr. Birrell's own manner, full of wit and wisdom, and written with the apparently unstudied ease that we duller creatures can never accomplish. It contains of course some characteristic utterances of Locker himself. He made many French acquaintances. "Foreign names," says Mr. Birrell, "always sound more imposing than our own. It is hard not to believe in Viollet-le-duc until we have seen his restorations." In Paris Locker called on Paul de Kock but forgot Heine. His sketch of Paul de Kock is delicious, though too long to quote at the moment. We regret of course that he did not see Heine; but sketches of Heine abound, and nobody but Locker seems to have troubled about Paul de Kock, whose novels, you will remember, are extolled in "Henrietta Temple," a story by another man of letters who dabbled in politics.

The volume has illustrations. One reproduces all the book-plates of the entire Locker family—all but one. We miss that of Locker's son-in-law. It should have been included—a confessed touch of personality in a volume rich with personal humour, charm and lettered ease.

GEORGE SAMPSON.

THE POETRY OF MEDITATION.*

Literary taste is in such a fluid condition at the present moment that it would be rash to say, of any particular school of poetry, that it was temporarily unpopular. Nevertheless, most of those who keep a finger upon the public pulse would probably agree that meditative poetry, and especially meditative poetry with a moral intention, is a little out of tune with the common choir. The natural trend of poetry at the moment is out of morality into impressionism; the prevailing method is the swift registration of a human mood, for instance, rather than the philosophic justification of the processes of nature or of the slow winnowing of fate. If that is so, neither Mr. John Freeman nor Mr. Gilbert Thomas, true poets though they both are, is likely to find himself vociferously acclaimed by the general taste; for both are essentially meditative poets, and both have a strong moral and philosophical bias. Each of them conceives of poetry as an interpreter between man and nature, and both are in the high tradition of the art in believing that poetry must deal with universal truths, if it is to be worthy of its heritage. The honour of such poetry lies in the fact that it is in direct descent from the great masters; its risk consists in the dangers that the moral may possibly overweigh the art; that what began as a song, in short, may end as a sermon. Neither of these particular poets is altogether immune from the danger; but they both invite the gratitude of all jealous lovers of poetic tradition for the dignity of their outlook,

* "Poems New and Old." By John Freeman. 10s. 6d. net. (Selwyn & Blount.)—"Poems: 1912–1919." By Gilbert Thomas. 5s. net. (The Swarthmore Press.)

Photo by E. O. Hoppé. **Mr. John Freeman.**

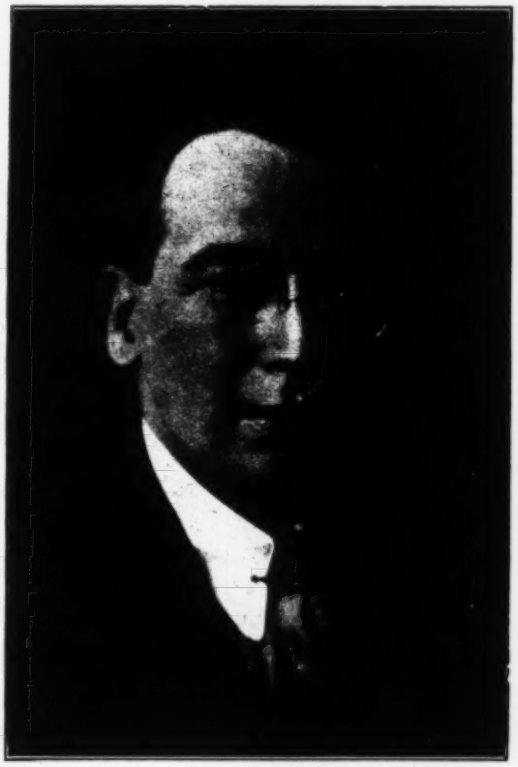

Photo by E. O Hoppé. **Mr. Gilbert Thomas.**

the integrity of their aim, and the deep spirituality of their imagination.

Mr. John Freeman, in point of fact, is so richly endowed with these very qualities: his outlook is so serene, his ambition so sincere and his spirituality so intense, that the reader may well feel baffled, if he finds himself forced to confess that he reads the poetry with less actual emotion and enthusiasm than he would wish to discover in himself, and that he rises from a study of the book with less material inspiration than he would expect to carry away. Here, we feel, are all the proper elements of the poetry of meditation, while in addition the workmanship is full of interesting experiments, and the melody, if not very varied, is always rich and sustained. Why, we ask ourselves, do we not read Mr. Freeman with a larger share of that unmistakable ecstasy which attends the enjoyment of the greatest poetry? The poet himself suggests a reason. Likening the various soul of humanity to the trees of the forest, he chooses for his own emblem a tree whose tardy welcome to the season has always been proverbial:

> "If to any tree
> 'Tis to the ash that I might likened be—
> Masculine, unamenable, delaying,
> With palms uplifted praying
> For another life and Spring
> Yet unforeshadowed: but content to swing
> Still branches chill and bare
> In this fine-quivering air
> That others' love makes sweetness everywhere."

Few readers, we fancy, will consent to Mr. Freeman's description of his art as "unamenable," but the rest of the passage is subtly self-critical. There is in all this poet's attitude to life and love a certain masculine austerity, a restrained passion for moral endeavour and moral realisation, which does undoubtedly rob it of the easy charm which seems to come naturally to much verse of a far more superficial and inconsiderable calibre. Occasionally, as in his invocation to the spirit of childhood, Mr. Freeman lights upon perfect phrasing and balance of thought expressing itself with the true lyrical impulse:

> "Come over, come over the deepening river,
> Come over again the dark torrent of years,
> Come over, come back where the green leaves quiver,
> And the lilac still blooms and the grey sky clears.

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" Come, come back to the everlasting garden,
To that green heaven, and the blue heaven above.
Come back to the time when time brought no burden
And love was unconscious, knowing not love."

Such a song as this captures for a moment the popular appeal, but it is not characteristic. The poet's natural attitude to nature is a distrust of emotion as a false guide, a fear of all purely physical expression of love, and a stern determination to let the soul itself embody the soul's devotion. The world is desolated with evil and disillusionment; the true consolation lies in thought, in "thought kissing thought," in the heart's music that "speaks a deeper rhythm. . . ."

" Be it thine, O spirit,
The world of sense and thought to exalt with light;
Purge away blindness,
Terror and all unkindness.

" Shine, shine
From within, on the confused grey world without
That, growing clearer,
Grows spiritual and dearer."

This is a counsel of austere perfection, and its very austerity accounts for the difficulty of following it with complete enjoyment. But its nobility is indisputable, and so also are the fine melody and strong architecture of Mr. Freeman's workmanship, the broad human sympathy, and the intense faith in the possibilities of the soul of man. At a time when so much of faith and hope is being so callously abandoned, it is a great thing to walk with Greatheart through the enchanted forest, and in the dark to be reminded of the dawn.

Mr. Gilbert Thomas is also a poet of meditation; but his dream has been shaken to its foundations by the bitter experiences of the last six years. Cruelty, false doctrine, and the temporary triumph of evil passions arouse him to a manly indignation. He does not lose his faith in the ultimate purpose of life, but he is poignantly awake to the responsibilities of the hour:

" O you, whate'er your speech or creed,
Whose souls to one clear law are true:
The world, in its most bitter need,
Turns dumb, unconscious prayers to you!
The past is dying. Leave it dead!
Arise! and to one purpose drawn,
By one waiting spirit led,
Go forward now towards the dawn!"

Mr. Thomas shares with Mr. Freeman an inspiring confidence in the quiet virtues. He is suspicious of noisy causes and easy victories. Sympathy and Humility are the qualities which he chooses to celebrate, and a very deep passion for humanity is alive in everything he writes. Without being a metrical experimentalist, he sings with an impeccable note; there is always music in his song, and behind the music a high spiritual purpose:

" Out of earth? out of earth? Nay, earthly looms will 'twine
Fine and costly fabric when the thread is fine;
But Love's magic looms will weave just as well
The fabric of heaven from the waste of hell."

Whether or not the poetry of meditation is attuned to the fashion of the hour, there can be no question of its beauty, of its spiritual force, or of its fidelity to the truest consolations of the human heart. Its welcome may be quiet, but it will be confident. Its circle may be small, but it will be strong.

ARTHUR WAUGH.

THE TALL VILLA.*

The paper-wrapper of this volume scarcely tells the truth. It announces "Lucas Malet's Thrilling New Novel," and it displays a picture with a ghost in it. Then the public thinks it knows what it will get when it buys "The Tall Villa," and in reality it gets something different but infinitely better. There is a ghost, it is true, but there is no thrill, or, at least, not the sort implied. There are thrills of calm pleasure over the excellence of the telling of the story; but, to our thinking, the ghost-part of the story comes as quietly and naturally as the rest, and Alexis, Lord Oxley, the ghost, is in the theme as importantly as is Morris Copley, the not entirely estimable husband of Frances, The outlines of the tale are these. Morris Copley, through some unfortunate speculations, loses money rather discreditably, and he and Frances—who was in a somewhat higher social position when he married her—are exiled to the tall villa near Regent's Park, a house belonging to Frances, and once the *nid d'amour* of young Alexis Oxley. Alexis had loved a lady who in turn loved him and then deserted him. This tall villa was the house in which he shot himself when he learned of the desertion. Frances, knowing nothing whatever of the story, leaves her familiar world of rank and fashion, and finds a mysterious happiness in her strange surroundings. She feels alert, free, expectant, and more and more convinced that in the tall faded drawing-room she is not alone. Morris Copley finds it necessary to travel to South America to restore his fortunes, and brilliant, eager, selfish, clever, pleasure-loving as he is, he finds there not only streams of silver from his mines, but other "metal" more attractive than his wife at home. Frances, meanwhile, establishes closer and closer links with the spirit which haunts the house. Terrified and eager by turns, she at last sees Alexis, speaks with him, sets him free from his torment of violent passion and despair, and begins the absorbing intimacy and devotion which consume her body and enchant her inner being. The scene changes at times, and Frances visits her uncle's castle in Hampshire and enjoys again the luxuries of former days. Then, too, Lucia Fitz-Gibbon, her cousin, and Charlie Montague, Morris's vulgar city friend and Frances's too-amorous admirer, come upon the stage to fill in and help forward the story. But *the* theme is that of the communion between the living woman and the spirit-man, and the picture that rises before the reader is that of these two stretching hands to one another across the bridge that lies between the two worlds. And at last, sitting in the gilt arm-chair, faint from exhaustion, the great thing at last happens:

" Frances, without shock of surprise, not only saw the figure of Alexis, Lord Oxley, but for the first time distinctly saw his face.
" 'Ah! our bridge still carries, then!' she cried, gently triumphant. 'All my preparations are made. Nothing detains me any longer here. Will it bear us both? Can I, too, cross it?'
" 'You have already crossed it,' he told her." . . .

and

" while she stood close beside him, her ghostly hands on his, his ghostly lips on hers, the silver-grey clad woman still rested, happily smiling, her moth-like eyes wide open, in the gilt arm-chair beside the fire-place."

The task has been difficult; some tricks of style irritate; but the book is one of a delicate excellence.

* "The Tall Villa." By Lucas Malet. 7s. 6d. net. (Collins.)

THE LAST OF THEM?*

The last mutterings of the war are still audible in the book world. And more pleasantly, perhaps, there than in the other aspects of the life of to-day. I, for one, would much rather read about the war than help to pay for it, or watch a wounded man limp down a street. I find reading less disturbing than either; and you remember things. . . .

After all, you *did* have some good times—jolly good ones. At any rate, you did if you were flying, whole patches of them. And this is what Captain Cunningham Reid gets across to you in his "Planes and Personalities: a Potpourri," which is really a delightful flying book, and one of an unusual kind. The author deals with many

* "Planes and Personalities: A Potpourri." By Captain A. Cunningham Reid, D.F.C., etc. With an Introduction by Lieutenant-Colonel W. A. Bishop, V.C., D.S.O., M.C., etc., and 8 Illustrations. 5s. net. (Philip Allan.)—"R.F.C., H.Q., 1914–1918." By Maurice Baring. 8s. net. (Bell.)—"With a Bristol Fighter Squadron." By Walter Noble, D.F.C. With an Introduction by the Right Hon. Winston Churchill, M.P., and 6 Illustrations. 3s. 6d. net. (Melrose.)

aspects of his subject, for he has had an unusually interesting and varied flying career, and he proves by the inclusion of a very fairly complete air glossary that he has the general reader's interests at heart—a concession which should make for the success of an attractive book. It *is* so unusual to come across authors who can write as well as fly!

A remark which may be necessary in the case of Captain Cunningham Reid, but is certainly not in that of Mr. Maurice Baring, for of course everybody knows that he can write (while admittedly he cannot fly). So one need not lay stress upon the literary merits of "R.F.C., H.Q., 1914–1918." Mr. Baring knows as much about the war in the air as anybody—much more than the mere average pilot, much more than any but very high personages indeed. He was General (I suppose both of us ought to say Air-Marshal) Trenchard's memory during the whole of the time that that very popular and remarkably able officer was "functioning" in France. "Make a note of that, Baring!" Many people have heard "Boom" say that, possibly without realising at the time that a collection of these notes—with a good many other things—would make one of the very best books on the war that has been, or is ever likely to be, written. Here, in a little over 300 pages, is the whole thing from start to finish—the murder of the Archduke, the fine confused feelings of 1914, the muddle, the order, the boredom (not much of this), some of the exhilarations, what Mr. Baring felt and thought and said, what your friends (or perhaps you) said or did—not always heroic stuff, thank goodness!—the pushes, the prisoners, the Chinese on strike because their French bread had holes in it and they were losing on the transaction, the Independent Force, the air staff, fighting, bombing raids, artillery observation, stores, the armistice. A little of everything—and all of it in a convenient volume which is the finest imaginable stimulant for the memories of those who have been through it, or some of it, and an eye-opener to those who haven't.

Mr. Walter Noble will not rouse your admiration and wonder to the same extent as Mr. Baring, but "With a Bristol Fighter Squadron" is by no means a bad little book for all that. For so dashing a person, with such horrid adventures to describe, Mr. Noble is sometimes a wee bit prosy, but his book is truthful and accurate and informing to a degree. And, to my mind, that is equivalent to saying that it is well worth reading.

L. T. S.

EPSTEIN.*

Lovers of the abstract in art have always been lovers of sculpture. At first there seems to be a certain oddness in this. Of all the arts, sculpture, with architecture, would seem most to demand concrete and sensuous things for its subject; the very material puts it at the opposite pole to music. Yet sculptors themselves have felt that their art is suited to express ideas rather than form, thoughts rather than sensational experiences; and from the time of the so-called "Psyche" of the Naples Museum to Michael Angelo with the Rondanini "Pietà," and Rodin with the great "Hand of God," they have endeavoured to capture in marble, stone or bronze ideas which can hardly be held by the brain or expressed in words. Epstein is a very curious instance of this pull of the abstract. He is so obviously a sculptor, a competent, a superbly competent maker of portraits, drawer of things as they look. His early work—I leave out some interesting black-and-white work he did while still in America—is full of direct, narrative power. The figures which gloom down on the passer-by in the Strand, the early busts, like that notable one in Johannesburg, all show him to be a man of remarkable and vivid power as a representer of things. Then, with the monument for Wilde's tomb in Père Lachaise, he breaks away from representation; for a year or two

* "Epstein." By Bernhard van Dieren. £2 2s. net. (John Lane.)

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seems to be influenced by Gaudier-Breska, and follows the odd fashion which is responsible for his Venus, the Doves and the whimpering, mouthing Job; then, with the war, there came a period in which he has returned vigorously to his portraits and produced a series as vital as any of his work, but troubled and heightened by the thought which had gone to the experiments of his more abstract days.

The progress is full of interest, and it can be studied in the excellent reproductions in this volume. I wish I could say that the reader would find help in Mr. van Dieren's text; but he will not. Mr. van Dieren, who seems inadequately acquainted with our language, writes the most terrible verbiage about art and artists in general. His views show no sense for style or for beauty, and his logic can be gauged by such a passage as this in defence of those elements in Epstein's work which have been attacked by the more academic critics who are suspicious, and not unjustly, of the morbid element in much modern art:

"Need I speak of some of Callot's engravings, of the horrible fantasies of Breughel or Bosch and most of their contemporaries? Or of the repulsive prostitutes, the horrifying old courtesans of Goya, the dwarfs and monstrosities of Velasquez; the miscarriage of animals, and generally unspeakable things by no less a cultured humanist and chaste personality than Dürer, whose unflagging interest in every abnormality (though I should perhaps make clear once more at this point on every normal thing equally) is well known. . . . From the shockingly decrepit old women, the criminal lunatics and satanists of Leonardo to the sickening, wretched, miserable idiots, thieves and whores of a Garschin or a Dostoievski, where is the novelty of interested motive? Is not Cervantes' 'Don Quixote'——"

But I think I have quoted enough to let the reader know whether he would care to study Mr. van Dieren's text. The passage, in its turbid, turgid style and complete lack of logic, is typical of most of the book.

So the reproductions remain—the Christ, so like from one angle to President Wilson, that one wonders whether the title and treatment were an afterthought; the "Tin Hat," Meum with a Fan, Muirhead Bone, Euphemia Lamb with its strange recollection of Mantegna, Mlle. Gabrielle Soeme with its deliberate revival of the Roman portrait. What is one to make of them? They differ a great deal from Epstein's earlier portrait work: they differ almost as much from the bust of Lady Drogheda which is in this volume; and the measure of the difference is, perhaps, evidence of the value of the more abstract sculpture. I cannot myself attach much positive value to the Venus, or to Rock-Drill, or even to the Mother and Child and the Doves; they seem to me definitely transitory work, work which a greater man would never have exhibited. Yet the experience of doing them has helped Epstein's art, helped him to find himself, and be surer of his own individual methods. The temptation of all portrait makers is satisfaction. After a time it is so easy to make a thing like. One sees it time and again. Men have gone on painting portraits until they cannot paint a bad one—or a good one. Then two courses are open, if they are to keep on with the work; and they may either begin to caricature, as Goya did, or they may begin to see a little deeper, and paint a little further, as Watts did. Epstein does both. There is caricature in the Iris Tree, rather cruel caricature; there is depth and a sense of vigour in Meum with a Fan, and in Euphemia Lamb. The work is not yet absolutely first-rate, for it is still critical rather than creative. Epstein still wants to talk about the thing; he cannot say it simply and let it be—he must over-emphasise something; exaggerate the size of the eye, pull the nose out, pout the under-lip, give an unnatural roundness to the cheek. He is a little afraid that truth will escape observation, so he moulds her not naked, but stripped or stripping. All that breeds an uneasiness which is alien to the greatest art. I believe he may still reach that; and when he does, it will be interesting to see if he returns to the sculpture of ideas, or is content to give us ideas in faces. Rodin, for all his efforts, never achieved what he planned; the gates of hell remain a gigantic pavilion, and Mestrovic's genius for abstract things is the genius of an architect. Of that Epstein shows no signs. There are hints here that he may yet achieve something supreme in decorative sculpture; but that will need an architect of equal ability; and can we hope to find him in England; or, if we find him, that his manner will suit Epstein's, or Epstein's his?

R. E. R.

ALFRED NOYES'S NEW VOLUME.*

Mr. Alfred Noyes has suffered much at the hands of the reviewers during the last few years. Before the war, if he was not generally recognised as one of our few outstanding poets, he consistently received the almost lavish praise of many of our most eminent critics; but, since the publication of "A Salute from the Fleet" in 1915, he has rarely been mentioned in the leading literary journals except in terms of depreciation and sometimes of ridicule. It is not merely that a new generation of singers and readers has arisen with ideals and standards fundamentally different from those of Mr. Noyes, for the very critics who used most assiduously to praise him have of recent years either ignored him or joined in the general chorus of disapprobation. The explanation is, of course, that the war, which threw all existing standards into the melting-pot, has radically changed the literary fashions of the hour; and, with the fashions, the critics have either changed, or maintained a discreet and bewildered silence. But so firmly rooted are Mr. Noyes's ideals, and so inflexibly sure the principles of his art, that he has steadfastly refused to change; and, in a series of short poems in his new volume, he gaily, yet very earnestly, lampoons what seems to him to be the literary and philosophical anarchy of our day:

"They are hawking a new rose for Eden.
It has feathers. It's green. I suppose
The only thing wrong with their rose is
The fact that it isn't a rose.
Who'll buy?
And here's a new song without metre;
And here again, nothing is wrong
(For nothing on earth could be neater)
Except that it isn't a song.
* * * *
"Here's, *item*, a ring, very plain, sirs;
And, *item*, a God (but He's dead).
They say that you'll need Him again, sirs;
So, *item*, a cross for His head.
Who'll buy?
Yes, they say that He'll rise from the dead, sirs;
It is only the fashions that die;
And—here are the thorns for His head, sirs;
They'll keep till you need 'em. Who'll buy?"

In saying that Mr. Noyes has not changed we do not mean, of course, that the war has left no impression upon his work. The tragedy and horror of the last few years have obviously moved him profoundly; they have tortured his nerves, and brought him almost to despair of the triumph of Right and Love in the affairs of men. But if the old ideals seem no longer to be capable of being translated into fact, they none the less remain the poet's ideals; and the war, which has worked revolution in many minds, has not essentially modified in any particular his attitude towards life and towards his art. Turn where it may in these pages, the eye falls upon the themes, ideas and rhythms so familiar to those who have followed Mr. Noyes's progress from "The Forest of Wild Thyme." Here again are lilting songs of Devon and Sussex, of Friar Tuck and Francis Drake, intersprinkled with didactic poems and with rather pompous pieces in celebration of special occasions and events. We wish we could say that Mr. Noyes always sings the old music with a new sweetness or power; but, though here and there a lyric of rare beauty flowers spontaneously upon the page, we cannot honestly acclaim this new volume as marking, upon the whole, any notable advance in the poet's achievement. For the fact that Mr. Noyes has not changed is, of course, an indication of his weakness as well as of his strength. There are ways in which his sincerest friends could wish him to have changed. It would have been well for him

* "The Elfin Artist, and Other Poems." By Alfred Noyes. 7s. 6d. net. (Blackwood.)

if the war had forced upon him, as upon many others, a more searching and sensitive self-analysis. He has, perhaps, an almost too impregnable faith in the rightness of his own vision and his own standards. Truth, to the wisest friends of Truth, will always be a matter admitting of discussion; and even the wildest experiments may yield some small good, however ridiculous in the main such experiments may be. But Mr. Noyes has no use for discussion or experiment. Truth to him, in art as in life, is a thing as plain and rigid as a lamp-post, not as infinitely diffused and intangible—yet pure and strong—as the sunlight; and he is just a little too ready to call us Bolshevists if we do not accept the gospel, and nothing but the gospel, according to Milton and Wordsworth and Tennyson. His creed, his standards, are rather too static; and his constant protestations of them inevitably lead him, when true inspiration is lacking, into arid wastes of rhetoric.

But after all this has been said we cannot be too grateful, in these days when reverence and faith of any sort are at a discount, for a poet who respects the high traditions of the past; who is not afraid or ashamed to confess his loyalty to the old beliefs of his fathers, and who has the courage to go his own way undeterred by fashions or by cliques. Mr. Noyes has his shortcomings; but the spirit that inspires his most characteristic work is the only spirit from which enduring art can spring. He does not aim at mere cleverness; he does not strive after mere beauty—or (like some of our younger bards) after mere ugliness. His real poems come from the heart, and call to the heart in others.

GILBERT THOMAS.

THE NEW YOUNG.*

Mr. Douglas Goldring here offers a pleasing collection of his papers, which all bookishly inclined persons (and there are few better) will enjoy reading. For my own part, I have enjoyed Mr. Goldring before and I hope to enjoy him again, especially when he has made up his mind what period of life he has reached. At present he wants to have it both ways. He wants to be young, and he wants to be judicial. I'm sorry, but he can't. Judges are not young; it is only Lord Chancellors who are frisky; but then they need not be judges, and in fact seldom are. Mr. Goldring betrays the natural desire of youth to cheek Mr. Wells as a back number, to tick off Mr. Bennett as a tradesman, to laugh at the English classics as unreadable furniture, to mock at bourgeois morality and to find serious artistry in the music-hall turns that Surbiton considers vulgar. Dear me! How it reminds me of the dear old nineties, when I too was young! We talked just like that; and so did our fathers before us. In one respect the New Young go much farther than we did. The log-rolling of the nineties is nothing to the log-rolling of the nineteens. The last Victorians boomed each other in reviews; the neo-Georgians put each other into novels, and, as far as I have discovered, they put very little else in.

All that is very usual and quite creditable. But just as you think you have placed Mr. Goldring with the New Young, he begins looking back, and almost wagging a wise old head in reprobation of "those boys." He buys Claudel, Péguy and Marcel Proust, but what he really reads for pleasure is—what do you think?—Prosper Mérimée! Yes, he is as old as all that. This is disconcerting, but it won't interfere with your enjoyment of his book if you are really a good reader.

I have indicated some of Mr. Goldring's subjects as well as his tendencies. Let me mention some others. The longest paper is a sketch of Flecker embodying personal reminiscences as well as some sound criticism. Hugh Walpole, Compton Mackenzie and Gilbert Cannan come in for a few home truths in another essay of considerable

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length. "An Outburst on Gissing" is as much a denunciation of late Victorianism as a criticism of the novelist, and it says much that is well worth saying, even though it declaims with some over-excitement. The clever but sterile women novelists of the day are next put through it, and then, as we have said, Mr. Goldring falls back on reminiscence. But not before he has given us a very palatable paper on "Wines," which I greatly enjoyed because the author writes as if he loved his subject. A connoisseur is not the same as a superior person. Our New Young are mostly superior persons. They express themselves in disparagements, like the superior high school mistress, the other day, who could proclaim her superiority in no better way than a public disparagement of the elementary school mistresses. But the critic, the connoisseur, expresses himself in appreciations, and is therefore creative.

Well, it is a tribute to Mr. Goldring that he has held us so far. He has something to say and he says it enjoyably. What more could one say of anybody?

GEORGE SAMPSON.

MR. MASEFIELD'S NEW BOOK.*

In every instrument there can only be a certain number of notes, and in every poet only a certain number of emotions: to expect more is to cry for the moon. And yet there is a sort of perversity, even in loyal admiration, which keeps on prompting us to ask of those we admire some novelty of impression with every new meeting. Married love has been known to languish under the repetition of familiar embraces; and in somewhat the same spirit the reader is apt to feel disappointed if a favourite poet evokes no fresh surprise with his latest gift of song. The demand, of course, is quite unreasonable. The wise enthusiast will stifle it at birth. Let us proceed to the stifling process without delay, if Mr. Masefield's latest volume appears to be, for the most part, an echo of old achievements. At least the new work is not unworthy of the old; and that should be enough, especially in these days of rapid and (occasionally) perfunctory achievement.

"Enslaved," the poem which gives its name to the volume, is, perhaps, the least satisfactory of its contents. It is a story of the abduction of a maiden by a Moorish chief; of her lover's pursuit; of his capture and condemnation to death, and of the chief's repentance at the last moment. The story in itself is thin, and the "knot" of the situation is scarcely worthy of the easy "god from the machine." There is a touch of theatrical melodrama about the whole business. Yet there is no subject, even of the most barren elements, which Mr. Masefield will not adorn with fresh fancy, and the picturesqueness of description never fails him. He has the seeing eye, or the telling phrase, constantly at his command.

"At an order all the oars clanked aft, and checked, and sliced the sea,
The rowers' lips twitched upward, the sheets tugged to be free;
The wrinklings in the sail ran up as it rounded to a breast,
The ship bowed to a billow and snouted through the crest. . . .

"Then they bade me stop my talking, and use my breath to row.
Darkness came upon the water, and they took my love below.
Fire in the oar-stirred water swirled in streaks that raced away,
Toppling up and down, the taffrail touched the red sky and the grey."

That is the genuine Masefield, the real thing seen and recorded. There follows a strong, weird mediæval story of the laying of a witch's crew of spectral hounds by the spell of a saint. Here again the familiar touch reveals itself:

"They dwindled as the mist that fades
At coming of the sun;
Like rags of stuff that fire abrades
They withered and were done.

"The cock, that scares the ghost from earth,
Crowed as they dwindled down;
The red sun, happy in his girth,
Strode up above the town."

Mr. Masefield excels in these little vignettes, done with a single touch, but every one full of colour and of life.

The gem of the book, however, is "Animula"—the tragic tale of two men, one woman, and a passion, told in verse of fourteen lines, which cannot rightly be described as sonnets, since they are deliberately conceived without the completeness and crescent growth of the true sonnet-form. Technically this is a *tour de force*, and it is carried out with unerring vigour.

It may be true that there is nothing in this little volume to add to our estimate of Mr. Masefield's art, but it is sheer ingratitude that demands something new with every new essay of the artist. At least "Animula" is Mr. Masefield at his best, and that should be enough for every true lover of virile, forcible and freakishly beautiful verse.

A. W.

* "Enslaved, and Other Poems." By John Masefield. 6s. net. (Heinemann.)

COLLECTED FRUITS OF OCCULT TEACHING.*

The Theosophical Society was established originally in America by one whom devoted admirers characterise as H. P. B., namely Madame Blavatsky. A day came when she passed over to India and there laid a new foundation. Mr. Sinnett, then editing *The Pioneer*, was one of her earliest and most zealous disciples; but he left India and carried the new Theosophy to England, where it became the fashion of a season. As most of us know, the clouds dropped down, and the story of the movement has been one of remarkable growth amidst assaults from without and internecine feuds within. It remains among us, a mouth speaking great things—so far as affirmation is concerned. In another form of symbolism it is a mouth of many voices, and one of the most insistent is Mr. A. P. Sinnett. In a preface to the present volume he tells us how in earlier books he has revealed the existence of "elder brethren of humanity," in touch with a Divine Hierarchy, and has communicated information received through occult channels, relating to human history some "millions of years" prior to historical records. This is how the case stands and is for those who can take it, presumably with all faults, for the society's troubled history has not been apart from scandal. The papers which follow the preface have been drawn from many quarters of reviews, class periodicals and theosophical transactions. It is of considerable interest to have them thus collected, for they cover a curious field. Mr. Sinnett has followed more than one interest in his time; we have met with him as an ardent bimetallist, a novelist and a convinced exponent of "the Baconian theory" of the Shakespeare plays. But he is first and always a theosophist, and this volume is one of its books of doctrine. We have no doubt whatever that the "revelations" which have come to Mr. Sinnett have been through channels corresponding to those which are called "mediumship" in the dialect of modern Spiritualism.

A. E. WAITE.

FOUR FIRST NOVELS.†

One feels in these poignant days a sense of mourning in the presence of first novels. They cannot help being first novels, nor is theirs the blame, only the burden, that the public cling with such quiet tenacity to the crusted reputation. For nowadays when paper is scarce and the printer dreams dreams the novel must advance in price and sell in proportion. The trade, like the public, prefer a "best-seller," and the new author is received with caution. Therefore the publisher, like those Russian mothers of history, veils his face and casts his first fruits

* "Collected Fruits of Occult Teaching." By A. P. Sinnett. 15s. net. (Unwin.)

† "The Story of a New Zealand River." By Jane Mander. 7s. (John Lane.)—"The Great Leviathan." By D. A. Barker. 7s. (John Lane.)—"Madeline of the Desert." By Arthur Weigall. 7s. net. (Fisher Unwin.)—"The Wider Way." By Diana Patrick. 7s. 6d. (Hutchinson.)

XUM

to the wolves. It is of serious importance then for young novelists to compel attention which they may well merit and, without offering a commercial and therefore a "tip" offensive to Art, it may be emphasised that the only road to recognition in a period profoundly indifferent to literature is to write not after any school or type, but upon the basis of individual inclination. It would, for instance, be interesting to examine in the spirit of the present crisis—and crisis it is—the chances of the books that follow or, as one would say with a tender Derby memory of a noble outsider, forecasts on form.

"The Story of a New Zealand River," by Miss Jane Mander, is ultra-modern in its attitude but so steady, competent, almost placid in treatment and scope that one expects to see opposite the title page "Books by the same author." There are no loose ends, no spurts of uncurbed exuberance, the horizon is wide, serene, impressive even, the character-drawing admirable, the tale, if leisurely, sufficient in strength. It is therefore, for a first novel, remarkable. On the other hand, for a story with its setting in the back country of New Zealand, it is almost devoid of atmosphere. And the book is too long, becoming upon occasions a little tedious. It is, in a sentence, a carefully constructed, able book, but mature—not promising of better things.

"The Great Leviathan," on the other hand, is quite obviously a first novel, with the quaint excrescences of our bewildering century bristling upon it, like one of those landlady's puddings wherein most things have made their contribution, affording to the whole a sense of arresting uncertainty. Mr. D. A. Barker is an intellectual, and as intellectuals, at any rate in fiction to-day, are considerably disturbed, his hero is pushed along that old distracted path upon which Michael or Peter, or whichever name was the vogue of the moment, have so depressingly preceded him. It must be granted Mr. Barker's Tom is better than some others. For one thing, his temperament is not so suggestive of the advertisement, "Have you a stab here?" For another, he keeps on the move. Unfortunately he goes so fast. One has a suspicion that Mr. Barker is too conscientious—that he wrote on a piece of paper for reference, "Cambridge–London–Labour–India." He strives to get in too much. As a Scots elder said of a too earnest young minister at the close of a sermon touching on most of the gravities of this life and the next: "Aye, he's conscientious an' he's clever, ye mind, but eh, man, hoo he scatters." Mr. Barker scatters, but his scattering does not all fall on stony ground. He has the grain, and in his next book I shall be surprised if he does not reap his harvest.

"Madeline of the Desert" is like "The Story of a New Zealand River" in three respects. It is not immature, it lacks atmosphere and imagination, and it suffers from length. But most of all Mr. Weigall injures his story by the introduction of a heroine in whom it is difficult to believe. Madeline is a beautiful and attractive young woman who has been brought up in surroundings of a nature certain to sear and blunt, and not develop the spirit of innocent inconsequence and intellectual stamina. Childhood is too impressionable for that. But putting that point aside, one is a little exasperated that Mr. Weigall, having allured us, as it were, by his suggestion of vice and desert sands, should suddenly turn his heroine into a kind of gramophone record for his (quite sensible) opinions upon Labour problems and the soul of religion. It is not, that is to say, a novel first and last, and there is not sufficient evidence of creative or imaginative power to encourage one in the hope that Mr. Weigall has the real heart of the business in him.

"The Wider Way," by Diana Patrick, is, judged as a first novel, the best of the bunch. It is not so deliberate in its theme as "The Story of the New Zealand River," nor is it as able. But it is original, promising, lively, with a clear cut manner—"a way of putting things," a breath of humour which, in such matters, can be likened to the foam of April blossom upon the young orchards. Veronica Queening, like Tom of "The Great Leviathan,"

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is a character who follows in the footsteps of countless other heroines—in fact, taken to pieces, the plot is contemptible. It reads like the synopsis of a daily serial. Veronica is poor but has a secret. Queening quite obviously cannot be her father. She visits old Lord Swarthe, one of those ancient immaculate peers who have done such sterling service for English fiction. Lord Swarthe pales. He writes a statement, hides it, has a fit, and dies. Veronica is cornered by the complete bounder in a lonely Grange. She escapes to marry a German. The document in the library is found. And so on. But Miss Patrick pulls it off. She contrives, even under the colossal burden of such a collection of rubbishy characters, to soak the story and Veronica in sheer personality, sincerity, and a real gift for humorous comment. Here is a first novel worth reading because, whatever its faults, it is so encouraging to think of the comedies of manners Miss Patrick will write so soon as she permits her characters to spin the web of their own destinies.

FREDERICK WATSON.

ORDERED WORDS.

If, as that clever actor Mr. Cyril Graham avers, it is difficult to assemble a paying audience for Euripidean tragedy, it is not for lack of the tragic spirit amongst us or because of any great popular affirmation of the "rightness" of the universe. As, for instance, one lingers over the brochure which contains Percy Addleshaw's "Last Verses,"[1] the shadow of Death seems to sting that lamented man to an utterance more powerful than was inspired by beautiful scenery, which, however, he felt like a cultivated person with eyes to see. And yet that something more than peace beyond understanding, the knowledge of the love of God, penetrates one very remarkable poem by him called "In Many Ways," in which the "curses" of a despairing watcher are benevolently answered. Addleshaw has been fortunate in having his last book enriched by so charming a preface as Mr. Arundel Osborne's. It is charming because, thanks to it, the lovable and piquant personality of Addleshaw awakens sympathy which he never sought and expands to something bigger than a minor craftsman in the belles-lettres.

Nevertheless, though Addleshaw had originality in the sense that he was not simply "typical" but could sometimes surprise you, there is no mistaking the fact that Mr. Robert Graves, whose "Over the Brazier"[2] appears in a revised edition, looks as new beside Addleshaw as an electric humming top beside a steam locomotive. The newness does not apply to philosophy. Mr. Graves's special genius resembles the spirit of a childhood akin to fairyhood, capable of expressing itself, as in "The Poet in the Nursery," with delightfully grotesque grace.

The late Mr. John Butler Yeats, however, asked if free verse were not "another attempt on the part of democracy to make poetry as clamorous and common as itself"; and, though these adjectives are very inappropriate to the free verse in Miss Dircks's "Passenger,"[3] I cannot see that her expressiveness gains anything by it worth the loss of tune. Indeed when, in a "free" stanza terminating a poem called "Underground," she remarks:

> "(Victoria at last,
> Then Westminster and Charing Cross . . .)"

one can't help asking why "St. James's Park" is omitted. "League of Nations" is also an unsatisfactory poem, for it attempts to impassion our humanitarianism without taking the trouble to use our language in a masterly way. These strictures are made because, this being Miss Dircks's second volume, she may be considered to be making, or about to make, a definite decision as to what her literary standard is to be. That there are beautiful and moving things in her volume is apparent to anybody who can feel poetry. Some anthologist will surely come along and cull her "Golden Privet," a pretty tribute to a prosperous bush. To grace this page I quote a sonnet, "Alone," which is bewitchingly feminine:

> "Now I have been alone all this long day,
> Removed alike from all the world and you,
> And love and hate and every flower that grew
> Were all a thousand, thousand miles away.
> Then like a leaning god I saw there lay
> The little world complete beneath my view,
> The little wars of souls, so old, so new—
> I saw myself among the players play.
>
> "I watched it all so quiet and unmoved,
> As though I'd never known a tear or smile,
> And never toiled and never longed for rest;
> Till starlight came and told me that I loved,
> And I was small and throbbing for a while
> Again, to seek my blindness at your breast."

The concluding seven words are a perfection of phrasing; and, with all its faults, the book is not a "Passenger" for oblivion that contains the felicities of thought, tenderness and humour present in Miss Dircks's poems.

Mr. Maunsell seems to have the poet's ear coupled with a strange indifference to the virtue of artistic economy. On his first page we encounter the disagreeable tautology of "scudding dreams that stir on restless wings"! Nor can I commend a sham optimism which asks:

> "Shall it matter to us, my darling,
> If the rest of the years hold grief?"

There is a considerable variety of metrical tune in Mr. Maunsell's book:[4] one feels, in fact, that if his singing could be heard simply as music it would be to the advantage of his reputation as an artist. One would then be charmed by spells of love and beauty and not vexed as we now are by feebleness or insincerity of thought.

Mr. Gleeson[5] is another singer who does not usually quite "come off"; he seems to have a firework which, with a more prosperous chemistry for its father and mother, would glorify the air handsomely like Mr. G. K. Chesterton's fireworks. One can, however, detach lines by him from their context with an effect gratifying to one's rhetorical taste. As thus:

> "God may have risen against God,
> But I was born but yesterday."

And again:

> "I gaze below upon vast buried skies."

Like many another poet Mr. Gleeson should aim at flawless coherence.

As to Mr. Trevelyan,[6] the last poet on my list, there is occasional grace in his treatment of the antique and of mythology; and a cat-poem, "Pusska," reveals him as an observant and delicate humorist, worth reading aloud. Moreover, in "The Lake" the fatal power of the tactless to break a fragile charm is felicitously exposed. The title-poem represents Man as accusing Earth of the "crime" of his birth. Chat results, but not much, I think, to the profit of poetry. On the other hand, in a dialogue between Christ and Lucifer, Mr. Trevelyan sheds at least a ray of light on the problem of the political function of Christianity.

W. H. CHESSON.

[1] "Last Verses." By Percy Addleshaw. 2s. 6d. net. (Elkin Mathews.)
[2] "Over the Brazier." By Robert Graves. 3s. net. (The Poetry Bookshop.)
[3] "Passenger." By Helen Dircks. 3s. 6d. net. (Chatto & Windus.)
[4] "Moods and Lyrics." By A. E. Lloyd Maunsell. 5s. net. (Duckworth.)
[5] "Songs of Saints and Sinners." By J. Desmond Gleeson. 5s. net. (Erskine Macdonald.)
[6] "The Death of Man, and Other Poems." By R. C. Trevelyan. 3s. 6d. net. (Allen & Unwin.)

Novel Notes.

POTTERISM. By Rose Macaulay. 7s. 6d. net. (Collins.)

"Katharine, I believe that the very essence of Potterism is going for things for what they'll bring you, what they lead to, instead of for the thing-in-itself. Artists care for the thing-in-itself. Potterites regard things as railway trains, always going somewhere, getting somewhere." Miss Macaulay has written her tragi-farcical tract with

stinging wit and considerable detachment. Jane, daughter of the Potter press, her modern heroine, a greedy, lazy, spoilt child, determined to take and keep the best out of life, and, if possible, pay nothing for it, weds Hobart, another true Potterite. But Jane grows to love Arthur Gideon, anti-Potterite, all bewildered bitterness against a world vulgar and soft-headed beyond the understanding. Hobart was pushed downstairs, and broke his back. Who pushed, and killed him? This is discussed at length, but the plot really matters little; on every page surges an angry protest against the greed and fear of life to-day. Yet in the sketch of Laurence Juke, the deacon, there is a flicker of hope. Even in the Potterite church of the day he perceives something sharp and clean and fine and direct, like a sword, "which will not let us be contented Potterites." A fiery and brilliant novel.

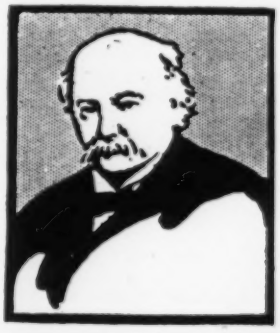
THE GOD IN THE THICKET. By C. E. Lawrence. 6s. net. (Dent.)

Mr. C. E. Lawrence is by temperament a romancist. He has the pleasantest gift for recreating the long-past and weaving the glamour and charm of ancient days into such stories as "Pilgrimage" or "Youth Went Riding," and when he pictures modern life in "Much Ado About Something" or "Such Stuff as Dreams," he touches it with fantasy, sees the beauty and joy of fairyland or the mystery of the spirit world mingling eerily with the sordid, commonplace, more generally visible people and things of our mundane sphere. He is an artist in dreams, and can bring the atmosphere and fascination of his dream-kingdom into solid London streets and among such practical mortals as present-day Londoners. Yet he gave us his ablest and most impressive story when he turned his back on all this, a couple of years ago, and wrote, in "Mrs. Bente," a strong, uncompromisingly realistic novel of our own times. With "The God in the Thicket" he escapes back into the happy realm of imagination, but the philosophy of his story has an exquisitely subtle application to life as it is lived in places that know nothing of fairies. It is all the stuff that dreams are made of, with one mortal astray among a strange, fanciful, butterfly people in a world that never was and yet always is, for after all it is the inner life of mortal men and women that is cunningly shadowed forth in these elves and gnomes and fays of Argovie, and the love and vain self-sacrifice of Jan Aylmer is poignant with the same passion and tragedy as human hearts have known. It is a dainty, imaginative fairy-tale, but its airy spirits are mortals in disguise, as in the material universe such spirits are disguised in mortality. The novel has become so sophisticated in form and outlook that little of novelty remains to it, but "The God in the Thicket" has the morning freshness of Sidney's "Arcadia," and appeals to the young of all ages, for it is alive with the age-old ideals and emotions of youth.

THE MILLS OF THE GODS, AND OTHER STORIES. By Elizabeth Robins. 7s. net. (Thornton Butterworth.)

A tale of revenge, brought about after thirty years of waiting, is a large subject for a short story, but one which Elizabeth Robins has chosen successfully for the romance which gives the title to this collection. Against a background of an old rock-built castle, looking towards Italy and the waters of the Glacier Mill below, is set a tragedy far enough removed from modern life to read as a romantic tale. Madame Paravicini plans the marriage of her step-daughter to Renzo Bellucci—Satanuccio, his friends call him—who himself is urging on the wedding. Alicia's silence he takes for shyness. Beauty such as hers is an answer to all questions. She is not like others, he tells himself, in one of the few sincere compliments he has ever paid a woman. The marriage takes place, and he learns from Madame's smile that the hour for which she has been waiting has come. The pace of the story is quick. A short story depends on incident, and Miss Robins understands the art. Her first interest is always in the tale which she is telling, whether of two women in "Under His Roof," one of whom marries the man both love and

NAT GOULD



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later finds out her mistake, or of old Threlkeld Hall, standing to the wind and the wild north-country weather, and the grim wyrd it works out upon its last child heir. Character-painting is given when the canvas will bear it, but the lines of necessity are broad. The success of the book lies in another direction—in the writer's sense of the dramatic, and in unobtrusive gathering of material with an economy of touch which in a phrase or a sentence pieces together what we need to know of the past.

JULIET. By V. T. Hewson. 7s. net. (Philip Allan.)

Mr. Hewson chooses a hard task when he sets himself to interest us in his "too-little-heroic heroine." He cannot be said to have convinced us, not that there are not such characters as Juliet, but that she exists just as he has painted her. She is incomplete. She is shown from one angle, as she appears to the four men whose lives she has spoiled. Seen only in the light of an obsession, the figure is out of proportion. There is no attempt to fill in the gaps of an ordinary life, the everyday moments that come to everybody. The result is that Juliet is shadowy, and to what we know of her we are not attracted. Her lovers, Hugh and Angus Hamilton and Trevor, cannot hold the interest which she fails to capture. They are just so many variations in one incident, the paying of homage to her beauty, and are too slightly drawn to have a value apart from association with her. They are material for her to work on, to tire of, and to throw away. This is least true of Hamilton, whom she calls "Johnnie," who struggles with a measure of success, to live his life in the pages.

THE MASTER OF THE COMMANDERY. By S. N. Sedgwick. 6s. net. (Books Limited.)

Mr. S. N. Sedgwick's new story is one of love and adventure set in the time of Henry VIII. The introductory incident which sends Richard Morysine, novice, out into the world, and empties the Commandery at Worcester of its monks, old and young, is part of the Reformation policy, and through it the novice's life is influenced both by Wolsey and the King. A most simple and devoted person, Richard is instrumental in killing a man, and so incurring the vengeful hatred of that man's young widow, Amecia Mors, lady-in-waiting to Anne Boleyn. He has to flee for his life, and, falling in with a Lollard and a strolling girl, is helped by them; the first travelling with him by devious ways on a mission to Rome for Wolsey, and the second following them with Amecia, as her woman, but secretly determined to defeat her mistress's murderous plans. Many and terrible are the adventures that befall the two women on the way and in the Eternal City. This is a thoroughly interesting story, told with a gentle and sane optimism which finds some good in all humanity; even the King and the Cardinal become real men under the author's skill, though the historical is never allowed to dwarf the personal interest.

Photo by H. Perry

Mr. S. N. Sedgwick.

THE ALMONDS OF LIFE. By F. E. Mills Young. 7s. 6d. net. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

The unexpected depths in womanhood and the disappointing shallowness of an unusually lucky man—these make fair game for a good player like Miss Mills Young. This time, instead of a plot where the South African scenes are part and parcel of the whole, she has given us one where they are a mere accident, for it could have unfolded itself with equal ease and equal logic if the characters had never left the Thames valley. In the same way, she need never have gone to China for her title, and yet we are more than grateful for the proverb that "the almonds of life come to those who have no teeth." The boon in this case is love, of course, and it befalls two young and normal people a stage too late, for George Allerton is married to a hearty, motherly and sensible woman, and Gerda has rushed out of poverty into marriage with a rich and indulgent man old enough almost to be her father. It is part of the delicate irony of the treatment that we get the best side of George from the outset, and that the two women whose lives he spoils have to straighten things out for themselves without any help from him. But we should like to think that a male author dealing with the converse case would treat it with the same easy, delicate strength that Miss Mills Young exhibits here, and keep his finger on the pulse of sound emotion as truly and as gently, with as utter an absence of jerks or unreality. It is the best, the calmest and deepest thing Miss Mills Young has written.

SESTRINA. By A. Safroni-Middleton. 7s. net. (Methuen.)

The author of "South Sea Foam" appears to have hung in hesitation between the claims of realism and the call of the ideal in this romance of the Southern Pacific. Rupert Brooke, one remembers, halted similarly in his travel-letters, and one's conviction is that if he had lived to develop those vivid tropical impressions of his into finished form, the ideal would have asserted itself as it never does in those disappointing letters home. Here, happily, Mr. Safroni-Middleton has conquered in the right way, and after bringing us through chapters of strange and thrilling adventure, touched with eccentric figures and wild oaths and scenes, he leads us up to a finish which is half idyll and half tragedy. Royal Clensy, the English youngster who lands among scallywags at Port-au-Prince and wins the love of the President's daughter by teaching her music, enters on a mad investigation into her father's share in the murderous horrors of Voodoo worship, the cult that at one time so fascinated the errant soul of Lafcadio Hearn. In the orgie of vengeance and rescue that ensues, the President falls and the lovers are sundered. They appoint a meeting many thousand miles away, and it comes to nothing. Sestrina drifts into worse adventures still, until the ship that carries her is driven ashore under a typhoon, and she is the only person left to release the cargo of lepers in the hold. The rest is the story of a desert island to be peopled by these outcasts, derelict in a double sense, until one alone survives to serve her and to love her as she deserves, for throughout all these mishaps by field and flood she has preserved her purity. The end crowns with a touch of elemental majesty a story which, with all its faults, has a greatness in it that is all but monumental.

ANNE. By Olga Hartley. 7s. 6d. net. (Heinemann.)

First novels are sometimes labelled with the phrase "great promise"; but it would be more just to say of Miss Olga Hartley's "Anne" that, for a first novel, it is a great achievement. Anne herself is a creation. You may like her, you may not like her; but you cannot help being interested in her. Left, through the jugglery of Fate, to the care of an erratic young journalist named John Halliday when she is a child of fifteen, she passes into the guardianship of Gilbert Trevor, who merges these somewhat lightly assumed responsibilities in the more serious ones of matrimony. The story tells the history of that marriage—an alliance between a self-centred, somewhat worldly barrister and a girl who is so far the prototype of Peter Pan that she refuses to grow up. Miss Hartley succeeds in keeping Anne a child in every phase of life and experience into which she is introduced. As a mother she would seem to be as badly in want of a nurse as her baby son; as a wife, what she really needed was a rather stern governess. When she separates from her husband, it is with the sullenness of the nursery. When she flies to the arms of another man, who loves her too much to dream of wronging her, she commits this spiritual outrage on the Seventh Commandment with all the irresponsibility of early infancy. It is impossible to do justice to the story

in so short a space. Miss Hartley has the photographic mind and quite a genius for presenting those details which throw up a scene or a person on the screen of the reader's mind. Her style is altogether charming.

TENSION. By E. M. Delafield. (Hutchinson.)

Most of us will be grateful to E. M. Delafield for immortalising Edna Rossiter, whose favourite touchstone in conversation was " Is it kind, is it wise, is it true ? " For who has not suffered from this sort of stucco person, jerry-built from basement to attic and so unreal as to make us wonder, sometimes, whether she is actually there for our exasperation or only the figment of a horrid dream. " Tension " is an amusing book. Light scenes etched in with an acid of which no other present-day writer possesses the secret—the foibles of human nature indicated without any blurr of sentiment, and yet we flinch as we read. It is so true, it is too true, it is true of us, too. Here is a faculty for observation that is most unusual, a clear brilliancy of presentment, the precision of *le mot juste*. E. M. Delafield is to be congratulated on a book which in construction, perhaps even in brilliancy, is an advance on her previous work.

JULIAN. By Isabel C. Clarke. 7s. 6d. (Hutchinson.)

A novel full of quiet charm. Miss Clarke describes the youth of Eunice, the small girl so misunderstood by her worldly mother. And the childhood of Julian, the sensitive hero, is also pictured with care and a host of loving details. The author, who writes fervently from the Roman Catholic point of view, gives a painful glimpse of poor Julian's eight-year-old conscience and first confession. We follow Eunice into early womanhood and through many happy days with Julian's people, the Parmenters, a joyous Catholic family. Already Julian and she love one another; but Eunice has yet to find it out, and engages herself to another man. She breaks off the engagement to go and live with her dreadful, drinking mother. The book ends with the understanding of the true lovers. There is something sympathetic and gracious about this easily flowing story, something simple and sincere. But Lady Mirton's deathbed conversion would have been better left out.

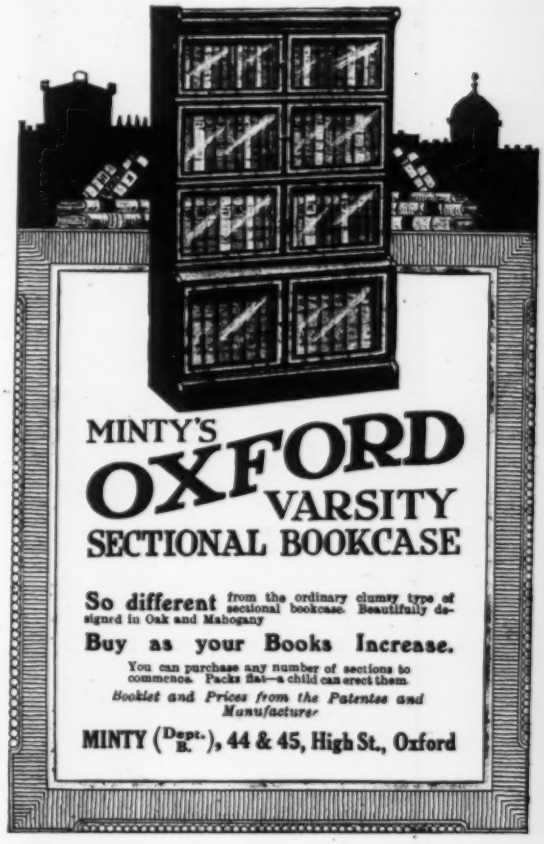
JACK O' JUDGMENT. By Edgar Wallace. 6s. net. (Ward, Lock.)

As a writer of sensational stories, Mr. Edgar Wallace is an artist—one had almost said a great artist. He realises that his first business and his last business and his business all the time is to tell a story that will grip the reader's attention and keep him guessing and mystified until the end. With this object all literary superfluities are eliminated. There is the story and nothing but the story. " Jack o' Judgment " is one of the best he has written on these lines. A gang of blackmailers give to their nefarious enterprises a cloak of legality by never taking money from their victims, but by forcing them to sell their property or their businesses at something like seventy-five per cent. below their market price. So cleverly do they work that it is impossible to bring them within the grip of the law, notorious as their doings are. Then Jack o' Judgment comes to the rescue of the police—a masked figure who cuts out and hunts down one member of the gang after the other. An excellent story.

The Bookman's Table.

COLLECTING AS A PASTIME. By Charles Rowed. 7s. 6d. net. (Cassell.)

In the tempting field of connoisseurship, especially where it touches the assembling of old-fashioned objects for the adornment of a house, there must be few men with so catholic a taste as the author of this book. He nurses no ambition here save to enlighten the amateur with a few useful hints as to the right acquisitions, but he contrives to cover in a pleasant and gossiping way such diverse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matters as clocks and furniture, pewter, pottery and china, brass and copper, Sheffield plate and old silver, old mortars, and even those jingling brasses which dangle, or used to dangle, from the fronts and necks of cart-horses and are dignified by the name and tradition of amulets. He says that there are over a thousand recorded designs of these quaint things, and the reason for collecting them seems to be, not so much because they are picturesque, but that the motor and the rationalistic spirit are driving from the roads this curious testimony to the superstition of our ancestors who decked their horses with bits of metal to make a soothing music to the horses' ear, and supply a shape suggesting pagan invocations to the human mind. The curious thing is that in amassing an enormous array of antiques and objects of what has been playfully miscalled "bigotry and virtue," the author has only bought one at a sale-room; and that being so, one can only congratulate him on having tackled the market in days that were earlier, or else in possessing not only great perseverance, but, as he confesses, serviceable and sympathetic friends who knock about the country.

THE JOY OF EDUCATION. By William Platt. 2s. 6d. net. (Bell & Sons.)

This is a capital little book that lives up to its title. It is an account of the actual experimental work done in a proprietary co-education school by a pair of enthusiasts with ideas, energy and courage. The story is told with engaging frankness and simplicity, and (unusual merit in a modern educational work) it is actual and concrete instead of being stuffed with abstract nouns and misty mysticism. No recent book that we have seen will do more good to the practical teacher and the education official. But we hope the public will realise that its own public institutions can scarcely, at present, be conducted on Mr. Platt's engaging lines. Thus, in answer to the question, "What do you do with a really rough boy?" he says, "If he does not quickly reform, recommend his father to send him elsewhere." An excellent remedy, no doubt. But we should like to ask Mr. Platt this question: "If you were an elementary schoolmaster with a class of sixty boys, several of whom were very rough, with even rougher fathers, what would you do?" Remember, every kind of school can get rid of its failures and problems by expulsion—all but the elementary school, which has to keep them for the statutory period. The stories and quotations given in these pages are perfectly delightful, and, unlike the usual run of alleged school anecdotes, they teach as well as amuse. We strongly recommend this excellent little book.

LONDON THROUGH CHINESE EYES. By M. T. Z. Tyau. 15s. net. (Swarthmore Press.)

The author of this frank, artless and quite entertaining volume is a brilliant young Chinaman who has passed through a university course in England with marked success. He has, moreover, endeavoured to plunge into the spirit of our national life. He is lost in admiration over some of our British possessions. The "Admirable Bobby" has a chapter all to himself and his guiding finger! But our way of serving afternoon tea worries the learned visitor not a little. "With a plate between your knees, your two hands being occupied, it is rather expecting too much of you to converse in any animated manner." He adds plainly, "I suggest that the dining-room should always be preferred to the drawing-room." . . . Again, with reference to the naming of our roads, "An Englishman cannot get along without his afternoon tea, so a Bread Street ought to have a Butter Street, and a Milk Street should go together with a Cream Street." His remarks on Western family life are quite in earnest—"In Europe the old people are left to shift for themselves in their declining years and this, from an Easterner's point of view, is almost inconceivable." Of the Chinese marriage system he says with complacency, "It is like putting pans of cold water on the stove and then applying fire to it." He is unduly pessimistic about our method.

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